

CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI



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B. N. Pande

Chhatrapati Shivaji

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ABOUT THE BOOK

In his Foreword, the speaker Lok Sabha Shri Shivraj B. Patil says :

"The book *Chhatrapati Shivaji* : A symbol of Secularism, is lucid, authentic and inspiring. The flow of language is arresting and poetic. The reader has not to strain his mind and imagination to grasp the meaning of words and the narration; and is likely to complete its reading in one day, if not in one sitting.

"The personality of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was shaped by the conditions in his family, by the conditions that prevailed in the Society and by the noble ideals which were portrayed in the pronouncements of the saints and sages of his time. However, there was some thing of his personality which was not found in others and which made him a great Hero in the history."

Shivaji was a symbol of secularism. When seven hundred Muslim Pathans of Daulatabad were discharged from service, they knowing Shivaji's totally secular outlook, approached him for employment. Shivaji employed each of 700 Muslim Pathans. Shivaji appointed Qazi Ibrahim as a judge. Shivaji sent Munshi Qazi Haider as his vakil to Diler Khan. Qazi Haider also looked after Shivaji's confidential Persian correspondence. Admiral Daulat Khan was one of the Shivaji's most trusted Admirals.

In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, "Shivaji was a devout Hindu, but was tolerant of other religions and established a number of endowments for maintaining sacred places belonging to Muslims. As a general he was undoubtedly one of the greatest in Indian History. Shivaji was a symbol of many virtues, more especially of love of the country."

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पुस्तकालय

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वर्ग संख्या.....

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पुस्तक-विवरण की तिथि नीचे अंकित है। इस तिथि सहित ३०वें दिन तक यह पुस्तक पुस्तकालय में वापिस आ जानी चाहिए अन्यथा ५० पैसे प्रति दिन के हिसाब से विलम्ब-दण्ड लगेगा।

**CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI
A SYMBOL OF SECULARISM**

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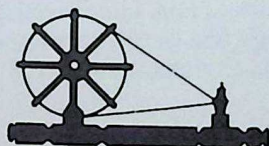
Chhatrapati Shivaji

A Symbol of Secularism



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Dr. B. N. Pande



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सत्यमेव जयते

अध्यक्ष लोक सभा

SPEAKER LOK SABHA

FOREWORD

The Book is lucid, authentic and inspiring. The flow of language is arresting and poetic. The reader has not to strain his mind and imagination to grasp the meaning of words and the narration; and is likely to complete its reading in one day, if not in one sitting.

Maharashtra is a land of mountains, rocks and rivers. The geography of a place does contribute to the forming of the attitudes of the People who occupy it. The difficult geographical conditions make them hardy, determined, frugal and imaginative. The geographical conditions in Maharashtra have been shaping the attitudes of the Maharashtra people.

Maharashtra has been a land of saints and sages who have understood the meaning of life and death, Man and God and their relation with each other, and the essence of unity in everything that exists. They have been singing the ancient philosophy in the language of the people and inspiring them to see the Truth and The Light.

The personality of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was shaped by the conditions in his family, by the conditions that prevailed in the Society and by the noble ideals which were portrayed in the pronouncements of the saints and sages of his time and the time that had elapsed before him. However, there

was something of his own personality which was not found in others and which made him a great hero in the history, different from others.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a great military strategist, a great administrator, a person who could see into the future and prepare his fellow citizens to face the contingencies of the time to come. If he were a hero born in western countries, he would have been rated as the most successful general; administrator and visionary and one of the greatest historical personages. But, as very little is written about him and different aspects of his personality have not been fully highlighted, the greatness of the Hero is not fully appreciated in his country and throughout the world.

He was a great military genius. He used men and material in such a manner as to overcome all odds that he had to face and create the kingdom of his own out of nothing.

His military victories would not have been possible and lasting, if he were not able to administer his kingdom in a scientific and correct manner. There are books written about his wars and strategies which are not less spectacular than those fought and followed by Napoleon or Caesar. But, there are few books written on the skill and principle used by him to carry on the administration of the land under his domain. It would be very interesting to go into the details of his administration and to understand the worth and value of it. In this Book, a very laudable attempt has been made to shed some light on some of the important aspects of it.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a man of principles, which he applied in his personal life and the matters of State in a pragmatic manner. He was great because he thought of things in comprehensive manner and of things pertaining to distant future too. He was not fighting a war of the Hindus against the Muslims. He was fighting a war of justice against the

injustice. In his personal life and in matters of State, he gave and received help to and from many Muslims. It would be a wrong judgement to hold that he favoured only the Hindus against the Muslims and was not secular in his attitude. In fact, he was grown up at a time in which the principles of Advait were sung and preached by saints and sages and in a family which was quite broad minded and had lived in the company of many families of Muslim generals, administrators and sufis. This point has been brought out very cogently and quite convincingly in this Book.

In the post Shivaji period, what happened to his kingdom, to his vision, to the country has been very ably narrated by the author. The account in this respect could not have been more elaborate and better. But it is very correct and convincing historically and is going to be useful in assessing the situations in all circumstances that may arise. It is a sort of a crown gleaming on the head of the historic personality. It is going to be of a very great value for the generations to come.

It is an honour to have been asked to write a foreword to this book. I thank Dr. B.N. Pande for it. I am sure the Book would be widely read in the country and outside and would contribute towards understanding the ethos of one of the greatest personalities of the History in the correct perspective.

I congratulate Dr. B.N. Pande for writing this brief biography of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. It is only persons like Dr. B.N. Pande who can write books like this and in this manner.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(SHIVRAJ V. PATIL)

New Delhi
2 July 1993

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The idea of compiling this volume on Chhatrapati Shivaji was conceived by the Government of Maharashtra. Shri Vasant Deshmukh, Executive Secretary, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj secular Aspects committee wrote to me that "a high level committee has been appointed recently to celebrate the tricentenary of the demise of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Shri A.R. Antulay the Chief Minister is the President of the Committee and the Vice-President is Sumitra Raje Bhosale of Stara. The Chief Minister desires that Shri B.N. Pande may undertake writing a book on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj both in English an, in Marathi, particularly emphasizing his secular policies and his generous treatment of the minorities. The committee will undertake publish these books in due course, and that this may kindly be taken up immediately." The letter was dated December 10, 1980.

I received another letter dated February 20, 1981 from Secretary to Chief Minister, informing me that "the Government is arranging a meeting with me of Prof. M.R. Ashtikar of Nagpur, who is known for his scholarship and is also taking interest in writing on Shivaji." Later I wrote

back to Shri S.P. Mohoni, the Secretary to CM, about my meeting with Prof. Ashtikar. I requested Prof. Ashtikar to meet Shri S.B. Chavan, Ex-Chief Minister of Maharashtra, now Union Minister of Home to enquire if he had any *formans* of Shivaji in his possession. I also advised him to get notes of late Mahamahopadhyaya Poddar on Shivaji. Prof. Ashtikar also helped me in collecting the source material for me. The Government of Maharashtra was good enough to place at my disposal the services of a stenographer and also of Prof. M.K. Shazli, a Professor of History at Shivaji College of Arts, Commerce and Science, Kandhar, who was also a scholar of Persian.

By the time the first draft of the book was ready, the Government was changed in Maharashtra and the project was shelved. After a lapse of nearly 14 years, the book is now going to see the light of the day. Its Marathi translation is also ready and is awaiting the sanction of the Maharashtra Government for its printing.

During the course of the preparation of this volume I consulted many eminent scholars of History who helped me with notes and suggestions. I am particularly thankful to late Prof. S.C. Mishra, the Head of the Department of History, Baroda University and also to Prof. Satish Chandra, the then chairman of the University Grants Commission and also to late Khwaja Ahmad Abbas who took keen interest in the preparation of this book, I also express my thanks to Prof. Ashtikar, Prof. Shazli, Late Prof. Moin Shakir, Prof. Rashiduddin Khan, ex-C.M. Shri A.R. Antulay, Shri Vasant Deshmukh, late Vasant Dada Patil for their help in finding the research material. I express my thanks to Prof. N. Radhakrishnan, Director of Gandhi Smriti & Darshan Samiti and also the printers for printing this book.

I offer my thanks to Shri Uttam Rathore, former member of Lok Sabha and a prominent social reformer, who

Acknowledgement

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is greatly interested in the publication of Marathi version of Chhatrapati Shivaji. I am also thankful to Shri A.S. Thorat for completing the Marathi translation of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

I am indebted to my wife Smt. Shanta Pande for helping me in the correction of the proofs. I am also thankful to Km. Manik Laher for going through the manuscript & checking the quotations and references.

B.N. PANDE

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May 1, 1994

INTRODUCTION

An Englishman, James Douglas, who in 1883 pointed out : "Over all those wide domains, which once owned Shivaji Lord and Master not one man now contributes a rupee to keep or repair the tomb of the founder of the Mahratta Empire".¹ In 1885, Ranade supported a fund-raising campaign for Shivaji's memorial, but it was Lokmanya Tilak who focused the limelight on Shivaji. It was under Tilak's inspiration that on 5 April 1896 the first Shivaji festival was organised in Raigarh, a place consecrated by Shivaji's coronation and death. The following year, it was celebrated in June on the anniversary of Shivaji's coronation. His heroic struggle against the rulers of the Deccan and the Mughal empire, and his success in carving a Maratha kingdom were recalled to inspire the people of Maharashtra with a new pride and enthusiasm. The festival had the usual features of a religious celebration : songs, dances, readings from the scriptures and distribution of sweets. Ballads exalting Shivaji's heroic deeds were sung, and lectures on Maratha history delivered. Huge portraits of Shivaji were carried in procession to the accompaniment of devotional hymns and shouts of '**Shivaji Maharaj ki jai !**'²

But it was Warren Hastings, who first wrote in 1784 :

"The Marathas possess, alone of all the people of Hindostan and Deccan, a principle of national attachment, which is strongly impressed on the minds of all individuals of the nation, and would probably unite

their chiefs, as in one common cause, if any great danger were to threaten the general state."

Commenting on this, writes Jawaharlal Nehru :

"Nonetheless the Marathas were catholic in their political and military system as well as their habits, and there was an internal democracy among them. All this gave strength to them. Shivaji, though he fought Aurungzeb, freely employed muslims."³

II

In the early decades of 17th century the Marathas attained high positions both in the army and at the royal courts particularly in the kingdoms of Ahmednagar and Bijapur. Under Malik Amber, who for a time stemmed the tide of Mughal advance in the Deccan and revived the glory of the Nizam Shahi dynasty, the Marathas acquired mastery which they used with great advantage in the years to come. Among the feudal Maratha chiefs who rose to eminence in the kingdoms of Ahmednagar and Bijapur, Shahji Bhosle, father of Shivaji, proved a great asset in the endeavours to stem the tide of Mughal aggression, particularly after the death of Malik Amber.

This rise of Maratha families and their growing importance in the political field gave new confidence to the Maratha people in general and contributed, to no small extent, in the creation of political consciousness among them.

At this psychological moment Shivaji appeared on the scene. Many young men, conscious of a spirit of awakening in the land, with passionate enthusiasm and reckless courage, gathered round Shivaji and acknowledged him as their leader. His daring exploits won the hearts of many more who joined him and the sympathies of others who still remained in the service of Bijapur. Moreover, the advent of the Mughals in the

Deccan, the extinction of Ahmednagar, and Shah Jahan's attitude towards Bijapur and Golconda indicated that, sooner or later, the southern states would be absorbed in the Mughal empire. Nor were the internal conditions in Bijapur any more hopeful. The quarrels at the Bijapur court, after the death of Muhammad Adil Shah, plunged the kingdom into disorder. No better opportunity could have been offered to the Marathas to reinstate the glory of their rule in the Deccan.

Never in their history were the Maratha people more united than at the time of Shivaji. There was born in the Maharashtra of that time a new spirit, a common feeling of patriotism. Shivaji, with his insight into the nascent forces of Maratha nationality drew towards himself all that was hopeful and vigorous, without distinction of class or creed.

The Marathas were by nature a freedom loving people. The basis of their character was activity, courage, self consciousness, self-reliance and pride of community. Geographical factors brought out these characteristics, which were further fostered by social forces.

To the poet-saints of Maharashtra is due the credit of loosening the social and religious barriers and bringing the Maratha people closer together. The movement dates back to the days of Jnanadeva (d. A.D. 1296), the herald of puritan and religious revival. Men are not great by birth; in the eyes of God all are one. Never ask a man's caste, when he has in his heart the faith in God and love of man. God wants in his children love and devotion and does not care for his caste. This rational explanation of society and firm faith in the basic quality of men of all classes permeated the entire country. The centre of the Bhakti Movement was Pandharpur. The preaching of these saints was centered on the idea that all men could gain salvation by giving up false class values and caste-ridden orthodoxy. These appealed to the Maratha people because of their

directness and simplicity. So the Bhakti cult or *Bhagavad-dharma*, as it is otherwise known, grew in strength. It reached its peak point with the greatest Maratha saint Tukaram (b. A.D. 1608). Another powerful influence during this period was the preaching of the poet-saint, Ramadas who urged in vigorous language the urgency and importance of *Swaraj* for the Maratha people.

So Maharashtra achieved a new religion, simpler, more rational, and more appealing to the common people. It also gave to the country a new literature in a language which the people could understand. The Marathas found themselves drawn together by common tradition, common language, common literature, common religion and common race. These factors were responsible for the new political upheaval; the Marathas aspired to achieve *swaraj*, and Shivaji fulfilled the urge.

The physical features of Maharashtra made Shivaji's task easy. The country is hill-strewn. After attacking a fort the Marathas could escape to the hills, avoiding pitched battles. They had developed a mode of fighting all their own, the guerilla technique, in which they had become pastmasters.

Shivaji started his political career during the reign of Muhammad 'Adil Shah of Bijapur (A.D. 1627-1657) when his kingdom had reached the zenith of its splendour. He gathered round him a band of young men inspired by the high ideal of founding a *Hindawi Swaraj*. He was much influenced in his choice of career by the preaching of his mother Jija Bai and the training of his tutor Dadaji Konddeva who had assiduously nursed the young hero's mind. The example of his father too, in carving out so significant a career for himself was before young Shivaji, and he became fired with an urge to do better than his father and to create an independent kingdom of his own.

Shivaji first captured the fort of Sinhagarh sometime in A.D. 1644. Next he took Rohida, built Raigarh and set himself to bring all parts of Shahji's western *jagir* under his own control, so as to form a compact state ruled by one authority. He easily captured Chakan and naming it Sangramdurg placed his own garrison there. He occupied also the Purandhar, Indapur, Baramati and Vijayadurg areas. Simultaneously he brought about administrative consolidation of this newly acquired territory and called upon the Deshmukhs in Adil Shahi service to join his standard. Those, like the Mores of Javli, who resisted this call were rooted out.

In this struggle for Maratha Swaraj which Shivaji had launched, he had to face the challenge of Adil Shahi authority and the might of the Mughal empire. Afzal Khan, the Bijapur general, who sallied forth to chastise Shivaji by fair or foul means, met his match in the Maratha hero who killed him at Pratapgarh (November A.D. 1659). The Mughals now joined Bijapur in an attempt to extirpate Shivaji. Shayista Khan, the Mughal governor of the Deccan, occupied Chakan and took up his residence at Pune. Shivaji, at this time besieged in Panhala, cleverly effected his escape and sought safety in Vishalgarh which he reached as Baji Prabhu Deshpande, his devoted servant at the cost of his life held his pursuers in the famous rearguard action at the narrow pass of Ghod-Khind. Shivaji spent some time during A.D. 1661-62 in raiding and occupying Adil Shahi territory in the Ratnagiri district, and after consolidating his conquests he fell on Shayista Khan at Pune in April A.D. 1663. Next year he ransacked Surat. But he was soon compelled by the Mughal general Jai Singh, who forced a treaty on him and persuaded him to visit the emperor at Agra. As the emperor was congratulating himself on the capture of this intrepid warrior, there came the thrilling episode of his escape from Agra.

Maratha power grew stronger and stronger and in June A.D. 1674 Shivaji was crowned at Raigarh. His kingdom comprised the whole of the Konkan area and extended from Gandevi (in South Gujarat) to Phonda on the Goa border, with the exception of Bassein lower Chaul, the islands of Bombay and Janjira. Its eastern boundaries, included Baglan in the north, passed through the middle of the present day Nasik and Pune districts, and comprised the whole of Satara and much of the Kolhapur region. He had deliberately built up a second line of defence, which he used also for offensive purposes against Bijapur and Golconda, under the exigencies of the situation. In the extreme south he had acquired possession of the strong fort of Gingee and the town of Vellore and its adjoining areas, and on the Tungabhadra he had Koppal and Bellary. This was an achievement of no mean order. He thrilled the Marathas and infused the spirit of freedom and self-confidence in them.

Shivaji was born on April 6, 1627 and died on April 3, A.D. 1680, leaving a vast kingdom to Marathas, succeeded by his son Sambhaji, who inherited his father's daring but not statesmanship or character.⁴

III

Shivaji, it has to be recognised, was primarily a man of action. In his brief life of fifty-three years, he packed more active campaigning than quiet policy deliberations. His genius thus tended more towards expansion than consolidation; creation than slow building up. He did establish a broad-based top echelon administrative system, headed by the *Ashta Pradhan*, his advisory and directive body to assist him in day-to-day administration, but he neither had the time nor the inclination to tamper or disturb the age-old institutions which the inner levels of the sociopolitical system had build up. At best, he can be said to have laid down broad lines of policy

orientation which could have been developed by his successors, had they been able to; but much of his legacy was lost in the holocaust which shook Maharashtra, particularly the Western region, in the period after his death.

Shivaji was by no means a fanatic; he was much more a pragmatic leader of men, judging men and matters shrewdly and purposively. He was undoubtedly a believing Hindu, his attachment to his faith being one of the deepest formative factors which he inherited from his mother and his childhood associates. The Brahmanic ethos, moreover, was one of the most important forces for his legitimization, even for mobilisation of his men. His sovereign status as a Chhatrapati was accepted certainly not only by his dazzling achievement but also by the recognition given to it by the pundits, the epitome of orthodox Brahmins, the recognised law-givers. This was essential in a medieval setting; in neighbouring Ahmednagar and Bijapur, a parallel role was performed by the *Ulemas*.

Shivaji's personal religious affiliation was, however, no bar to his broad humanitarian sympathies, even less to his essentially pragmatic political insight. He needed mobilisation both of men and resources and neither could be had, if he had sympathies which were either limited or exclusive. He fought against Ahmednagar, against Bijapur, against the Mughals, against a host of Maratha Sardars, even against his brother, but he never penalised a person for what he was, for his personal religious sympathies or affiliations.

For one, this catholicity or breadth of vision was owing to an early environment and training. Whether deliberately or inadvertently, he had experienced deprivation, seen poverty first-hand, passed his childhood among people, simple, hard-working, wronged but proud, traditional, self-reliant and accustomed to fighting and the use of weapons. No school could have been better devised for instilling into the young man, respect for Man, for his beliefs and rights.

Thus, in an age when for upper class regal or semi-regal potentates, woman per se was more an object of use and enjoyment than a living human being; when captured women were legitimately the property of the victor; Shivaji had a deep respect for women in any condition. In 1657, when presented with a beautiful Muslim girl seized from Kalyan, he remarked, "If my mother Jija Bai had looked as well as you do, I too should have looked as handsome." An observation like this which placed a humble captive girl on par with the Queen Mother, the most revered figure in his Court, automatically established a precedent and a moral; there could be no molestation of women afterwards and there was none. Neither in peace nor in war did a woman suffer at Shivaji's hands or within his knowledge.

While returning from Karnatak expedition he was opposed by one Desai, the Kiledar, who was over-powered. His wife fell into the hands of Sukhoji Gaikwad, an officer in the army of Shivaji. Sukhoji raped her. The incident terribly upset Shivaji. He ordered Gaikwad to be blinded first and then put into prison till his death.

Bhikaji Gujar, the Watandar of Babji, similarly molested a helpless house wife. His *watan* was confiscated and his feet were amputated.

With equal depth and sincerity, Shivaji respected the symbols of religion other than his own. No Quran, no mosque suffered at his hands. Whenever a copy of the Quran fell into his hands, he treated it with reverence and handed it over to the one entitled to hold it. Likewise, no *mujawir* and no beneficiary of a religious grant was deprived of it ; invariably, it was confirmed and the beneficiary allowed to enjoy his grant.

IV

"The profound reverence in which Shivaji held the Muslim saints was not an isolated instance. It was but an

example of the ties of brotherhood which had grown between Hindus and Muslims of the India of those days, and was fully in keeping with established tradition and common practice."⁵

Prof. Kulkarni mentioned how the Muslim saint Shaikh Muhammad emphasised in his discourse the common points between Hinduism, and Islam and insisted that the *Sachcha Pir* of the Muslims and the *Sadguru* of the Hindus were one and the same. Kulkarni mentions how Shaikh Muhammad himself was initiated into the Bhakti cult by a Hindu Guru. He believed in the essential unity of Hinduism and Islam. He did not differentiate between a temple and a mosque.

And it is no accident that the hermitage of this Muslim divine was established at Shrigonde in the Ahmednagar district by the help of Maloji Raje Bhonsle, the grandfather of Shivaji. Nor is it an accident that Shivaji's grandfather had accepted this renowned Muslim divine, Shaikh Muhammad, as his true Guru.

Even the Mughal historian, Khafi Khan, who made no attempt to conceal his loyalty towards Aurangzeb and his extreme hostility towards Shivaji has recorded in his '*Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*' that when Shivaji attacked the city of Jalna he saw to it that any man, woman or child who sought refuge in the shrine of the Muslim saint of that city, Sayyad Jan Mohammad, was not harmed in any way as he had given strict instructions to his troops not to attack or in any way harm the Muslim Saint's dwelling-place.

The contemporary historian Khafi Khan says that Shivaji had explicitly ordered his soldiers and officers that if any Muslim woman or child fell into their hands during warfares, they must be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. Their honour must be protected by the Maratha soldiers.

Khafi Khan adds in his *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* that Shivaji had given specific orders to his soldiers that "If the sacred work of Islam, the Quran, would come into their hands in the warfare or ransacking, they must show due respect to it. Shivaji punished severely those soldiers who transgressed in these matters."⁶

Sir Jadunath Sarkar has recorded in his *House of Shivaji* how Ranabulla Khan became a close friend of Shivaji after Shivaji had defeated him near Kolhapur. It was after Ranabulla Khan's defeat that Shivaji conferred on him the title of "Rustom-i-Zaman II."

Balkrishana, in his *Shivaji the Great*, has recorded the equally close friendship of Shivaji with Ranabulla Khan's son, Abu Khan, on whom was conferred the title of "Rustom-i-Zaman III."

Orme's *Fragments* as well as the *Tarikh-i-Khafi Khan* have recorded not only Shivaji's friendship with Siddi Khan of Janjira, but also Siddi Khan's willingness, through his letters, to surrender the fort of Janjira to Shivaji.

Paramanand in his *Shiva Bharat* has recounted how when Shivaji was entrapped in the fort of Panhala, and Shivaji's Commander, Netaji Palker, made a desperate attack on Panhala to rescue Shivaji, it was actually the valour and courage shown by Shivaji's Muslim Captain Siddi Hilal which actually succeeded in saving Shivaji.

The Marathi collection *Parnal Parvat Grahana-Dakhyanam* records how it was the same Muslim Captain Siddi Hilal who was sent by Shivaji to lead his armies against the Mughal Commander Bahalol Khan, and how Siddi Hilal successfully encircled the Mughal armies of Bahalol Khan. The same work records how when Bahalol Khan's elephant ran amuck and was being taken away from the field, it was the same

Siddi Hilal who along with his sons made a sudden dashing attack on the Mughal armies, causing a total disarray in their ranks.

Indeed, the Marathi language *Ekvanav Kalmi Bakhar* records how this same Siddi Hilal was so completely trusted by Shivaji's that he was sent secretly as Shivaji's most dependable spy to Aurangzeb's court.

The Marathi *Shedgaonkar Bakhar* records the devoted service rendered by the Pathan Sardar Ibrahim Khan to Shivaji. It was the Muslim Commander Ibrahim Khan, who under Shivaji's orders, led the attack on Bednur which belonged to the Hindu Chieftain Shivappa Naik.

G.H. Khare writing in the Marathi *Shivcharitra Samshodhane-Vritta* records how it was Shivaji's trusted personal bodyguard Siddi Ibrahim who saved Shivaji's life when Afzal Khan's bodyguards attacked Shivaji during the eventful meeting with Afzal Khan.

The list of Shivaji's Muslim friends, loyal colleagues, and trusted confidants is endless. Once when seven hundred Muslim Pathans of Daulatabad were discharged from service, they, knowing Shivaji's totally secular outlook, approached him for employment. Without hesitation Shivaji employed each of the 700 Muslim Pathans.⁷

Shivaji appointed Qazi Ibrahim as a Judge, Shivaji took over from the Sultans of Ahmednagar the services of Quazi Sherif Hakim Shara Munshi Qazi Haider. Shivaji sent him as his Vakil to Diler Khan. Qazi Haider also looked after Shivaji's confidential Persian correspondence.

Admiral Daulat Khan, one of Shivaji's most trusted Admirals, led Shivaji's fleet in the attack on Janjira near the river Satvak, and who later in 1679 attacked the English fleet

and with sixty sailing ships encircled the fort of Khanderi "with such speed that the English vessels at anchor near Khanderi had scarcely time to go under way."⁸

So innumerable are the incidents showing Shivaji's deep respect for Muslim saints, and friends and colleagues, that the catalogue would be virtually endless.

The very atmosphere of the period was such that a great leader like Shivaji could not but be totally impartial in his dealings with Hindus and Muslims alike, and totally secular in outlook, attitude and day-to-day behaviour. If Shivaji fought Aurangzeb it was purely on socio-economic and political grounds. It was without the least trace of malice or rancour, without any consideration of race, religion or creed.⁹

V

Shivaji's protest against *Jaziya*, addressed to Aurangzeb illustrated his benevolent policy of religious liberalism. It deserves to be quoted in excerpts :

"To the Emperor Alamgir, this firm well-wisher Shivaji, deeply grateful for divine favour and your kindness as clear as daylight, begs to inform Your Majesty as follows :

"I returned from your presence without seeking your permission. It is my misfortune. But I am ready to serve you in every possible way. May your kindness be felt by everybody. As a well-wisher I am placing some matters before you."

"Recently, it has come to my ears that owing to your war against me, your treasury has become empty. You have decided to meet the expenditure through the imposition of *Jaziya* on the Hindus."

“Your Majesty, Akbar, the founder of your empire ruled for fifty-two years. He had adopted the excellent policy of treating with peace and equality, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Dadupanthis, Stargazers, Malakis, Atheists, Brahmins, Jains, in fact all the communities. His aim was to ensure the welfare and protection of all. That is why he came to be known as the *Jagadguru*. The result was that to which direction he turned, success and glory attended his arms. He brought most of the country under his sway.

“After him Nuruddin Jahangir, ruled for twenty years. He led a life full of good deeds and became immortal. Shahjahan ruled for thirty-two years. He too made his life fruitful through good deeds. That is why these rulers were successful in whichever direction they turned. During their rule a number of provinces and forts came under their sway. They have passed away, but their names endure. Their greatness is beyond description. One measure of their greatness is that you have tried to imitate them but without success. Now you are at loss to understand why this should be so.

“The previous rulers, had they so desired, had certainly the power to impose *Jaziya*. But they felt that all men, big and small, were the children of God, and all religions, but means to the worship of the Almighty. They never allowed the feeling of religious hatred even to touch them. The memory of their kindness and the good deeds they did, is always fresh in the world. All men great and small, praise and bless them. During their rule the people had peace, and as a result, their glory increased day by day and success attended their affairs.

“But during your regime many provinces and forts have gone out of your hands. The remaining provinces and

forts too will be lost to you. I will not spare any efforts to ruin the provinces. Your subjects are crushed. The income from your Paraganas and Mahals is decreasing day by day. It is difficult to realise even thousand from places the income where of was one lakh previously. Poverty is striking the kings and princes. The plight of noblemen and *Mansabdars* is apparent to every body. At present your soldiers are discontented, the Muslims are in anguish and the Hindus are scorched. Men are pining for bread. They are red in face because they are striking their mouths with their hands.

"They are in such deep distress, and yet you have imposed *Jaziya* on them. How could you do this ? This evil news will spread from East to West. People will say : 'the Emperor of Hindustan had taken a begging bowl and is out to realise *Jaziya* from Brahmins, Jains, Sadhus, Jogis, Sanyasis, Bairagis, the poor and the starving people. He takes pride in doing so. He is laying in dust the name of the Taimur dynasty. Such will be the deep feeling of the people.

"Your Majesty, in the Quran, God has been described as the *Rabbul Almeen*; the Lord of the entire Universe, not as *Rabbul Musalmeen* ; the Lord of the Musalmans. In fact, Islam and Hinduism are both beautiful manifestations of the Divine spirit. The call for Prayers is given in the mosques, the bells ring to the Divine glory in the temples. Any one bearing fanaticism and religious hatred must be said to be acting against the commands of God. To presume to draw lines on these pictures is *verily* to lay blame on the Divine Artist (God)!

"To point out blemishes in any of His creations only means that you are blaming the Creator. Do not do so.

"To be just, *Jaziya* cannot be justified on any grounds.

It is an innovation in India. This is unjust. If you feel that on grounds of religion and justice the imposition of this tax is essential, you should first realise it from Raja Jai Singh. For, he is the leader of the Hindus. It will not then be difficult to realise it from this well-wisher."

Such a letter both dignified and defiant could not have been penned by a man with narrow sympathies and sectarian preferences; rather, he would have seen in it an adequate justification for a parallel policy of persecution directed against the Emperor's co-religionists. That Shivaji was above this short-sighted attitude shows beyond doubt his broad humanistic, humanitarian sympathies.

Shivaji's letter made a deep impression on Aurangzeb. For his own outlook, he blamed his teacher, Mulla Saleh.

Aurangzeb asked Mulla Saleh :

"But what was the knowledge I derived under your tuition?" and complained, "Was it not incumbent upon my preceptor to make me acquainted with the distinguishing features of every nation of the earth; its resources and strength; its mode of warfare; its manners, its religions, its form of governments and wherein its interests principally lie and by a regular course of historical reading to render me familiar with the origin of States; their progress and decline; the events, accidents, or errors, owing to which such great changes and mighty revolutions have been effected?" He added, "A familiarity with the languages and religions of surrounding peoples may be indispensable in a king, but you would teach me to read and write (only) Arabic, forgetting how many important subjects ought to be embraced in the education of a Prince, you acted as if it were chiefly necessary that he should possess great skill in grammar, and such knowledge of law and of the sciences only through the

medium of Arabic ? I have a perfect remembrance of your having, during several years, harassed my brain with idle and foolish propositions, the solution of which yield no satisfaction to the mind - propositions that seldom enter into the business of life. When I left you, I could boast of no greater attainment in the sciences than the use of many obscure and uncouth terms, calculated to discourage, confound and appal a youth of the most masculine understanding. If you had taught me that philosophy which adapts the mind to reason, and will not suffer it to rest satisfied with anything short of the most solid arguments; if you had made me acquainted with the nature of man, accustomed me always to refer to first principles, and given me a sublime and adequate conception of the universe, and of the order and regular motion of its part, I should have been more indebted to you than Alexander was to Aristotle."

Shivaji stands on a lofty pedestal in the hall of the world history, not because he was a champion of Maratha cause, but because he was an ideal householder, an ideal king and an unrivalled nation-builder. He was devoted to his mother, loving to his children, true to his wives, and scrupulously pure in his relation with other women. The close relations were refused any administrative favours. Above all he was totally secular in his outlook and a patriot par excellence.

He was, however, unfailingly fair in his dealings with his soldiers, with his officials, with his people, never letting any consideration of caste or religion affect his judgement. By definition, he was a *go-brahman pratipalak* (protector of cows and Brahmins) but his paternalistic umbrella was broad enough to embrace all his people, irrespective of caste, colour and creed.

Summing up the contribution of Shivaji, Jawaharlal Nehru says :

"Shivaji did not belong to Maharashtra alone; he belonged to the whole Indian nation. Shivaji was not an ambitious ruler anxious to establish a kingdom for himself but a patriot inspired by a vision and political ideas derived from the teachings of the ancient philosophers. He studied the merits and faults of the systems of administration in kingdoms existing at the time and determined his own policies and administration in the light of that knowledge.

"A devout Hindu, he was tolerant of other religions and established a number of endowments for maintaining sacred places belonging to them. As a General he was undoubtedly one of the greatest in Indian history; he saw the need for and raised a navy to guard his coastline and to fight against the British and the Dutch.

"Pratapgarh fort built in 1656 stands today as monument to his military genius. Shivaji is a symbol of many virtues, more especially of love of country."

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Chapter One

Maharashtra-Land and People

The Home of the Maratha people is made up of three equally marked regional divisions. Between Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea lies a long narrow strip of land of varying breadth, called Konkan (between Bombay and Goa) and Kanara (South of Goa). It is an area of certain and heavy rainfall, (from 100" to 120") with plantain and coconut palms orchards. After crossing the Ghats, eastwards there is a belt of land, some 20 miles (33.3 kms.) in breadth, called Mawal. It is an extremely rugged series of table-lands cut on every side by deep widening valleys. Going further towards the East, the spurs of the Western Ghats sink, the river valleys widen out and form *Dash* or the vast rolling black-soil plain of the Central Deccan.

This land, almost locked among the hills and open only in the East, is the cradle of the Maratha kingdom. In the East of the Ghats the rainfall decreases rapidly and is uncertain and insufficient for agriculture, while the soil is entirely sterile and broken up by low ranges of their rocky hills. The Deccan, generally speaking, yields after too much labour a bare measure of subsistence.¹

In such a country, where nature forces simplicity there can be no luxury, no 'Learned Leisure' except among the priests, no aesthetic development, and even no polished mannerism. But, such a country and climate have their compensating advantages. They develop self-reliance, courage, perseverance, stern simplicity, a rough straight-forwardness, a sense of social equality which consequently brighten the dignity of man as man. In the 7th century, Hieun Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, noted that Marathas were "bright-spirited and war-like, grateful for favours and revengeful for wrongs." In the course of many centuries, after the Chinese pilgrim's visit, the basis of their character remained the same, activity, self-reliance, self-respect and love of equality.

He described the Marathas in the following words :

"Their manners are simple and honest. They are proud and reserved. If any-one is kind to them, he can be sure of their gratitude, but if any one injures them they will take their revenge. They will risk their life to wipe out dishonour. If any one in distress appeals to them they will lay aside all sorts of self in their anxiety to help, even if they have to avenge, they never fail to warn their enemy. In battle, if they pursue the fugitives they always spare all who surrender. These men love study and there are many followers of Buddha among them."²

Social distinctions were fewer among the 16th century Marathas than among richer and more civilised communities. The sense of equality was fostered by the religion. The popular saints of the 15th and 16th centuries taught that the sanctity of conduct is more important than mere birth. They asserted on the dignity of the soul and the oneness of all true believers in the eyes of God.

The simplicity and uniformity of early Maratha society were also reflected in their language and literature, which were

though undeveloped, yet essentially popular. Nature provided them with many readymade and easily defensible forts close at hand where they could quickly run for refuge and from where they could offer resistance. The whole of the Ghats often terminate towards the top in a wall of a smooth rock, highest points of which, as well as detached portions on isolated hills, form natural fortresses with a level space on the summit. In many of them there are springs of the finest water. Thus a remarkable community of language, creed and life was attained in Maharashtra in 17th century, even before political unity was conferred by Shivaji.

Nature had endowed the Marathas with a compact territory which was not easy of approach. The low range of the Western Ghats which runs spine-like between the plateau and the seacoast, the table-lands of western Deccan and the littoral of Konkan formed the homeland of the Marathas. The vast expanse of the Arabian sea washes the coastline. It showers embarrassing benefactions upon the land - torrential rains and inter-continental commerce. The Ghats offer retreats, safe from the tramp of enemy horsemen. Their lonely mountain crags serve to purge the eerie castles which afford refuge from pursuit and vantage spots for dominating the plains around. The table-land is intersected by valleys through which rivers flow down to the east. The valleys contain rich soil; otherwise the land is fit only for millets and coarse grains - *Bajra* and *Jowar*.

In this region of coast, hills and uplands the Marathas led hard and frugal lives. Their surroundings bred independence in them and a spirit of adventure and sturdy self-reliance. Great differences of wealth, as in the North and the South, did not appear among them and the large class of peasant-proprietors formed the backbone of the society. Caste distinction existed as in other parts of India, but the jealousies of the three Brahmin groups, the strong position of the Marathas and the

popularity of their reform movement among the masses, mitigated the rigours of caste. A common language-Marathi-gave cultural coherence to the people's aspirations, and a sentiment of unity.

Under the mild rule of the Ahmednagar and Bijapur Sultans, the Marathas had abundant opportunities to prosper and to rise in influence. A number of Maratha families built up small chieftaincies; many entered the services of the Sultans and some obtained offices of trust and responsibility. In the 17th century the rivalries of the successive Sultanates of the Deccan gave impetus to the ambition of the Maratha Chiefs. The atmosphere was electrified by religious enthusiasm and destiny stood beckoning importunately.

Before the advent of Shivaji there was no specific Maratha State nor any sense of Maratha regionality. The kings of Central and Western India throughout the early and middle ages had their Chief towns in Maharashtra and the people living there shared in the extraordinary prosperity of Western India. In the first three centuries of Christian era trade with Europe was brisk; there were Greek merchants in the coastal towns and Greek mercenaries at the courts of local princes. In the 15th and 16th centuries princes changed envoys with Sasanian Kings of Persia and constructed the astounding rock-temple of Ajanta and Ellora.

Deccan Sultans and Marathas

The people in Deccan did not regard the Muslim administration in any way a burden. The reason was that although the Ruler was a Muslim, the State administration and defence were practically in the hands of the Hindus. The Maulvis and Brahmins were recipients of religious charities from the State without any distinction. One of the kings of the Bijapur was a devotee of Lord Dattatreya. The commands of

the forts were formally issued in the names of Muslim *subedars* but in reality the administration was in the hands of Hindu officials.

In the Muslim State of Golconda, Sardar Murar Rao was the Prime Minister. Madan Pandit, a Brahmin, was instrumental in bringing about friendship between the Sultan and Shivaji. Another Brahmin Minister Dada Narsu Kale was as famous as Malik Ambar for his efficient administration. He evolved an effective system for revenue administration. In his dealings with Mughal Darbar, the Ahmednagar Court was invariably represented by Brahmin *vakils*. The Prime Minister of Sultan Burhan Shah was a Brahmin. Aishu Pandit was working as a *Mustahfi* in the Court of Bijapur. Akkana and Madanna were the two famous Ministers in the Court of Golconda. The Muslim Rulers of Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Golconda offered high posts to the Maratha chiefs. One of the Bahamani Kings enrolled 200 Marathas as his bodyguards. A Maratha Sardar, Jadhav Rao, assumed so much power that he was considered 'a Kingmaker' of the Bahamani Raj. Murar Rao Jadhav once saved the honour of Bijapur Raj. Shahji, father of Shivaji, earned high honour, reputation and distinction in the Courts of Bijapur and Ahmednagar. He ruled for many years as a Regent of the boy king of Ahmednagar.

The Maratha Chiefs Shirkes, Jadhavas, Nimbalkars, Ghatges, Mores, Mahadiks, Giyars, Mohites, etc., commanded large armies, ten to twenty thousand strong, and served as *Mansabdars* of the Rulers of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda. The Maratha Sardars had very cordial relations with Bahamani Muslim Rulers and whenever the Mughals tried to subjugate the Muslim Kingdoms of Deccan the Maratha Chiefs fiercely fought against the Mughals in defence of the Bahamani Rulers. It may also be noted that there is at least one instance on record which states that the temple of Madhukeshwara in Kalyani, which suffered damage during the rebellion of

Bahauddin Garshap, was restored by order of the Governor Qutluq Khan, the Shivalinga was reinstalled and ceremonial worship resumed. Khwaja Ahmad, Officer at Kalyani called upon the citizens to worship at the shrines as usual. This happened in 1326 during the reign of Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq and possibly under instructions from him.

The Sultan also showed much intellectual curiosity and held discussion with Hindu Pandits. This suggests that even during this period by confrontation Muslim rule was being accepted by leaders of Hindu thought, and Hindu religion was not viewed with antagonism by the Muslim Rulers.

Allauddin Ahmad II established a hospital at Bider where Hindu and Muslim Physicians were appointed. He came very close to the Hindu subjects and was comforted in his last illness by the sage of Gangapur (most probably Narasimha Saraswati known as Shah Faqir). The *Gurucharitra* eulogises the Sultan as one who though without caste, was a large-hearted Ruler, who showed generosity to his people without distinction of caste and creed. He evinced devout attitude towards the Brahmins.

Marathas

The Marathi-speaking areas of the Deccan were parcelled out among the Sultanates of Berar, Ahmednagar, Bidar and Bijapur. Berar was conquered by Ahmednagar in A.D. 1574 and Bidar was annexed by Bijapur in A.D. 1620. The Marathas, with the exception of few families like the Nimbalkars and Ghorpades, were denied opportunities under the Bahaminis to rise in the service of the State. But under the succession States, particularly in the kingdoms of Ahmednagar and Bijapur, the Marathas attained high positions both in the army and at the royal Court. Under Malik Ambar, who for the time stemmed the tide of glory of the Nizam Shahi dynasty, the Marathas

acquired mastery which they used with great advantage in the years to come. Among the feudal Chiefs who rose to eminence in the kingdoms of Ahmednagar and Bijapur were the Bhosles, the Manes, the Shirkes, the Jadhavs, the Ghatges, the Gujars, the Mohites and the Mahadiks, to name only a few. Shahji Bhonsle, father of Shivaji, proved a great asset in the endeavours of the Nizamshahi rulers to stem the tide of Mughal aggression, particularly after the death of Malik Ambar.

The Marathas held important positions in the military and administrative system in Ahmednagar and Bijapur, and their power and influence in the affairs of Government had grown as the Mughals advanced towards the Deccan. Both the Deccani Sultans and the Mughals made a bid for their support and Malik Ambar engaged the services of Marathas in his army in a large number. Although a number of Maratha families - the Mores, the Ghatges, the Nimbalkars etc. - exercised local authority in some areas, the Marathas did not have any large, well-established states as the Rajputs had. The credit for setting up such a large state goes to Shahji Bhosle and his son Shivaji. For some time Shahji acted as the Kingmaker in Ahmednagar, and defied the Mughals. However, by the treaty of 1636 Shahji yielded the territories he was dominating. He joined service of Bijapur and turned his energies to Karnataka, taking advantage of the unsettled conditions. Shahji tried to set up some independent principality at Bangalore, just as Mir Jumla, the leading noble of Golconda, tried to carve out such a principality on the Coromandel coast. A number of other Chiefs on the western coast, the Siddis, behaved in a similar manner. This forms the background to Shivaji's attempt to carve out a large principality around Pune.

By the terms of the treaty of 1636 the Sultan of Bijapur acknowledged Shah Jahan as suzerain and agreed to pay tributes. The boundary between the Mughal empire and Bijapur was drawn just north of that track of land which had

been granted to Shivaji's grandfather Maloji. As soon as the war was over, Shahji sent for his son and wife to Bijapur. For the first time Shivaji left the hilly country where he had spent his wayward childhood. It must have been a melancholy journey through districts ruined by the war : burnt villages and crumbling towns; a few trees, smoke-blackened and stunted; and miles and miles of empty uninhabited land, rolling yellow towns, ochre spear-grass, sighing in the wind. It was only as they approached Bijapur city that they came upon evidence of life and prosperity-here there were gardens and canals and wide mass groves of mango and lifting their eyes, the travellers would have seen in the distance a line of dump and dark along with the skies, Bijapur, the Indian Palmyra.

This rise of Maratha families and their growing importance in the political field gave new confidence to the Maratha people in general and contributed, to no small extent, in the creation of political consciousness among them. The Sultans of Ahmednagar and Bijapur had all along shown tolerance and consideration for the Maratha subjects. But the middle of 17th century witnessed a growing intolerance towards them in the Adil Shahi Court at Bijapur. This offended the Marathas and alienated their sympathies.

At this psychological moment Shivaji appeared on the scene. Many youngmen, conscious of a spirit of awakening in the land, with passionate enthusiasm and reckless courage gathered round Shivaji and acknowledged him as their leader. His daring exploits won the hearts of many more who joined him and the sympathies of others who were still retained in the services of Bijapur. Moreover, the advent of the Mughals in the Deccan, the extinction of Ahmednagar, and Shahjahan's attitude towards Bijapur and Golconda indicated that sooner or later, the Southern States were to be absorbed in the Mughal empire. Nor were the internal conditions in Bijapur any more hopeful. The quarrels at the Bijapur Court, after the death of

Muhammad Adil Shah, plunged the kingdom into disorder. No better opportunity could have offered to the Marathas to reinstate the glory of Maratha rule in the Deccan.

Another factor that contributed to Shivaji's phenomenal success in his nation-building activity was the existence of small centres of Maratha power scattered all over Maharashtra. Owing to the smallness of their numbers, the Muslim powers of the Deccan had to leave much of their administrations to the Hindus. Some of these Hindus rose to high position in both the civil and the military administrations of the Deccan Sultanates and were granted *watans* and *jagirs* commensurate to their status. Some of the Maratha Deshmukhs must have held *watans* even before the start of the Bahamani rule.

Thus, at the beginning of the 17th century there was galaxy of *Deshmukhs* or *Watandars* - the Mores, the Shirkes, The Dalvis, the Jadhavs, the Nimbalkars, the Ghorpades, the Surves, the Sawants and others - who were practically independent of the ruling authorities. Of course, there was no love lost among these *watandars*. They had not only remained separate, but separatism had become the keynote of their political behaviour. Their rivalries were so numerous, their feelings so hot, and their collections so frequent, that for the sake of *watan* they were ready 'to do and die.' Shivaji shrewdly sought to convert the turbulent spirit and the intense love for the original patrimony of the Maval Deshmukhs into the larger and nobler cause of *Swarajya* by welding them into a single body politic.

Religion of Maharashtra

According to M.G. Ranade :

Samarth Guru RAMDAS, the spiritual guide of Shivaji, exhorted Shivaji's son, Sambhaji, to follow the footsteps of his father, and the advice he gave may be summed up in two

sentences, "Unite the Marathas together" and "Propagate the Dharma (Religion) of Maharashtra." The question naturally arises as to what Ramdas could have meant by recommending Sambhaji to propagate, not the Vedic, Puranic, or the Hindu religion, but the religion of Maharashtra. What was there so particular and distinct in the religious belief of his contemporary countrymen which so strikingly attracted Ramdas's notice; and was deemed by him to be a sure remedy for securing the salvation of his people about the close of the seventeenth century? The close connection between the religious and political upheaval in Maharashtra is a fact of much importance.

Under the rule of the Yadav Kings of Devgiri, Gyandev, the first saint and prophet of Maharashtra, wrote his famous commentary on the Bhagavatgita, in Marathi, in the twelfth century.

Just about the time of the rise of the Maratha power there appeared a galaxy of saints and prophets, whose names have become household words with the people of Maharashtra. Roughly speaking we may state that the history of this religious revival covers a period of nearly five hundred years and during this period some fifty saints and prophets flourished in Maharashtra, who left their mark upon the country and its people. A few of these saints were women, a few were Mahomedan, nearly half of them were Brahmans, while there were representatives in the other half from among all the other castes: Marathas, *kunbis*, tailors, gardeners, potters, goldsmiths, repentant prostitutes, slave girls, and the *dalit* Mahars. The influence of higher spirituality was not confined to this or that class, but permeated deep through all strata of society, male and female, high and low, literate and illiterate, Hindus and Mahomedan alike. These are features which the religious history of few other countries can match or reproduce, unless where the elevating influence is the result of a widespread popular awakening.

In Northern and Eastern India a similar movement manifested itself much about the same time. Nanak stirred up the Punjab to rise, and made a supreme effort to reconcile Hinduism with Islam. Chaitanya in the far East sought to bring men back from the worship of *Shakti* and *Kali* to the faith of the Bhagwat; while Ramanand and Kabir, Tulsidas and Surdas, Jayadev and Raidas contributed each in his own way to the work of spiritual enlightenment. Their influence has been great and abiding. The names of Changdev and Jnandev, Nivriti and Sopan, Muktabai and Jani, Akabai and Venubai, Namdev and Eknath, Ramdas and Tukaram, Shaikh Mohammed and Shanti Bahamani, Damaji and Udhav, Bhanudas and Kurmdas, Bodhle Bawa and Santoba Powar Keshav Swami and Jayaram Swami, Narasinha Saraswati and Rangnath Swami, Chokhamela and the two potters, Narahari Sonar and Savtia Mali, Bhiram Bhat and Ganesh Nath, Janardanpant and Mudhopant, and many others that might be cited, furnish an array which testifies to the superior efficacy of this movement in Maharashtra.

The movement in Maharashtra propagated by the saints was a movement against the monopoly of the Brahman caste, and it was against the exclusive spirit of this caste domination that the saints and prophets struggled most manfully to protest. They asserted the dignity of the human beings quite independently of the accidents of its birth and social rank. The circumstances of their own birth and education naturally predisposed some of these preachers to take up such a position. As observed above nearly half of them were of castes other than Brahmans, and some of them of very low castes indeed. Many of the Brahman reformers also had some stain in their inherited purity which led or forced them to rebel against all artificial restraints.

Jnandev and his brothers and sister Muktabai were born to their father after he had retired from the world and became a *Sanyasi*. His spiritual guide, Ramanand came to know that

this *Sanyasi* had not obtained his wife's willing consent to a change of *Ashram*, and he ordered him to go back to his native place and live with his wife. The children so born to the *Sanyasi* became marked objects to caste aversion, and the Brahmins refused to perform the initiation ceremony when the brothers reached the proper age. The children remained in this unrecognized condition all their life, and were revered, notwithstanding this defect, in their caste respectability. Another saint, Malopant, was married to a low-caste girl, whose caste was not discovered till after the marriage, and the husband did not abandon her, but only held no intercourse with her, and, when on her death, he performed her death-rites as usual, a miracle was displayed which satisfied his worst enemies, that Malopant and his *Mahar* wife were both holy by nature. Jayaram Swami's master Krishnadas, was similarly married to a barber girl, and the inferiority of her caste was discovered after marriage. The holy life of the man had, however, such an effect that at last, after much persecution, even the high priest Shankarcharya of the day raised no objection. Eknath, it is well known, made no secret of the little importance he attached to caste distinctions. He fed a hungry *Mahar* at his house, and when out-casted, allowed himself to be taken to the river for purposes of purification, when a miracle took place by which the merit of feeding a hungry *Mahar* was proved to be far greater than that of feeding many hundred Brahmins, for the former merit cured a leper of his foul disease, when the latter failed to make any impression on him. A very common miracle is reported to have been performed by many of the saints notably by Jnandev, Eknath, and Nagnath, when, on the refusal of the Brahmins to officiate on *Shradha* ceremonies in their places for breach of caste regulations, the deceased fathers of the obstinate Brahmins were made to descend to earth, and shamed their incredulous sons into the belief that their caste exclusiveness was wholly out of place. In Namdev's biography his God of Pandharpur, who had allowed Namdev

to invite Brahmans to a feast and himself partook of that feast with the saint, was himself excommunicated, and then the story relates how Jnandev who was present in spirit, remonstrated with the Brahman persecutors. He said :

“There was none high or low with God. All were alike to Him. Never entertain the thought that I am high born, and my neighbour is low of birth. The Ganges is not polluted, nor is the wind tainted, nor the earth rendered untouchable, because the low born and high born bathe in the one, or breathe the other, or move on the back of the third.”

The most touching incident, however, is that which occurred in the persecution of the out-caste *Mahar Chokhamela* for his having dared to enter the temple of Pandharpur. When remonstrated with for his temerity, Chokhamela replied that his God took him inside by force, and he did not go of his own accord. He remonstrated with the Brahman worshippers of the temple in this strain :

‘What availeth birth in high caste, what availeth rites or learning, if there is no devotion, or faith ? Though a man be of low caste, yet if he is faithful in heart and loves God, and regards all creatures as though they were like himself, and makes no distinction between his own and other peoples children, and speaks the truth, his caste is pure, and God is pleased with him. Never ask a man’s caste when he has in his heart faith in God, and love of men. God wants in his children love and devotion and He does not care for his caste.’

The Brahmans, as might be expected, were not satisfied by this preaching of high wisdom. They complained to the officer of the place, and he, like Pilate of the Bible story, ordered Chokhamela to be punished by being tied to and driven by a team of bullocks, and tortured to death in this cruel

fashion. God, however, miraculously delivered his worshipper, and baffled the oppressors, for the bullocks would not move from their place.

The story of Bahiram Bhat is also interesting in this connection. Being a Shastri, he did not find peace in Brahminism and, therefore, became a Mahomedan under the impression that its monotheism would satisfy the craving of his heart, but failing to find the satisfaction he desired, he returned back to Brahminism. Both Brahmans and Mohamedans found fault with him for these changes of faith, but he disclaimed being either Hindu or Mohamedan. Bahiram Bhat challenged the Brahmans to make him a true Brahman as long as his circumcision mark was not removed, and he challenged the Mohamedans to fill up the holes in his ears, which showed that he was still a Hindu.

Shaikh Mohamed's Mohamedan followers, even to this day observe the *Ramjan* fasts, and the *Ekadashi* fast, and make pilgrimages to Mecca as also to Pandharpur. There are many other saints of great renown who, like Kabir, Nanak and Manik Prabhu are claimed both by Hindus and Mohamedans as belonging to their respective communities, and worshipped and revered as such by both. These examples will suffice to show how the lives of these men have tended to elevate the national conception of man's spiritual nature, and shook the hold of caste intolerance.

The Maratha saints of the Bhagwat Movement like Jnaneshwar, Namdev, Eknath, Chokhamela, Santa Mali, Sena Nai, Gore Kumhar and others brought about a secular awakening in Maharashtra.

The caste system was, as it still is, a dominant feature of the Hindu society. The Bhagwat or Markara Movement, as it was known, succeeded to some extent in modifying the harshness of the caste system by the propagation of a simpler

form of worship, devotional literature in the local language and greater movement of people from one place to the other through pilgrimage. The effect of the movement was to make a Maratha society acutely aware of its spiritual heritage and way of life.

Namdev

Namdev was probably the first saint of Maharashtra who tried to liberate the people from the shackles of caste system, ritualism and religious narrowness. He preached equality of all men, love of all beings and devotion to one God. In the word of Ranade :

“Exhortations of Namdev and other saints like him led to the advancement of Maratha literature, the relaxation of caste restrictions, the rising of the status of women, broadmindedness and kindness to all and to an extent the unification of Hinduism and Islam. Exhortation of these saints also led to a decrease in the importance of ritualism, and increase in the importance of love for all, decrease, in the worship of numerous gods and goddesses, and increase in the power of people in both thought and action.”

Khechar

Khechar was the teacher of Namdev. It is evident from his teaching that Khechar was against idol worship. He says:

“The stone idol never speaks. How can it relieve us of our worldly ills ? People wrongly regard a stone idol as God, but the true God is quite different. If the stone idol could fulfill our wishes, then how does it break into pieces when it drops down?”

Tukaram

Tukaram was the most famous and most universally respected saint of Maharashtra. He was strongly opposed to the caste system and other forms of ritualism. He preached the existence of only one God, whom he generally calls Hari and exhorted the people to worship *Him* alone. He saw and felt the existence of God in the heart of every living being. Tukaram's main aim for which he worked hard was the unification of Hinduism and Islam. The English rendering of one of his verses is as follows :

"O my dear Baba, whatever God wills that alone happens. God is the Creator of us, He is the King of us all, our cattle and our field, our gardens all our wealth affecting all our existence. O my friend, my heart is set upon my Master. He is my Creator. I am riding my mind as one rides a horse, the real rider is the self (Atma). Always talk of God, all forms are His forms. He has created all in His own image. Tukaram says that he who understands this truth alone deserves to be called a *Darvesh*."

"Of all the great names, the name of Allah ranks first, repeat it constantly, do not forget it. Verily there is only one Allah. All prophets are His prophets. When we reach that state I and thou will disappear, the distinction between I and thou will vanish. There are no I and no thou."

There can be no doubt that through the synthesis of Hinduism and Islam, foundations were being laid in the country of common universal humanity, with unity, love and service as its creed.

Acharya Vinoba has described Tukaram as "the very monument of renunciation and surrender." There is a well-known anecdote of his renunciation. Hearing of his great fame as a saint and knowing how poor he was, Shivaji, sent Tukaram

a gift of gold coins, ornaments and expensive clothes. Tukaram declined the gift.

Tukaram was himself completely indifferent to creature comforts. He even invites suffering, if it means bringing him closer to the Lord :

Says Tukaram :

Make me homeless, wealthless, childless;
Give me calamity; starve me with lack of food;
Let me suffer calumnies;
Only give me the Lord;
Let only Him live in my mind and heart.

Such was Tukaram's selfless devotion to the Lord.

The Saints tell us that the soul, having trapped itself in *Maya*, or illusion, collects good and bad *karmas* and continues to go round the cycle of birth and death. It runs after the mirage of wordly happiness, never finding any lasting peace. Tukaram describes the plight of the soul in the following words :

The soul was in truth free,
But it chose to be bound
By getting entangled in 'me' and 'mine.'
it tires itself out running after a mirage,
Like a deer in pursuit of water.

So the aim of human life is to free the soul from the bondage of illusion and with the Master's help, unite with its creator. Tukaram speaks of the indestructibility of the soul, of the nonduality and omnipresence of the Lord. This is the permanence, the truth behind the transience of life and human existence.

Says Tukaram :

Cream, curds and butter, all come from milk;
Many are the ornaments made from gold;

Diverse the pots that are fashioned from clay.
Likewise, countless souls inhabit countless forms,
But the core is the Soul alone;
In truth, all are one.

In this poem, Tukaram brings out the powerful effect of association with Saints, which imbues the ordinary man with saintly qualities.

Agnimaji gele agni houni tech thele

Whatever enters into fire becomes fire;
Naught is left of its own name or quality.
At a single touch of the philosopher's stone,
Iron turns to gold, becoming precious to the world.
No sooner does a brook flow into the Ganges,
Than it becomes the Ganges itself.
Mere contact with the sandalwood tree,
And plants all round emanate the same aroma.
Likewise have I embraced the feet of Saints,
And my separateness is extinguished, says Tuka.

The Ladder of Nam

Tukaram says that the Lord cannot be attained through external rites and rituals, nor by undertaking penances and austerities. *Nam*, the Name of the Lord, alone is capable of removing illusion and bringing the cycle of birth and death to an end. Tukaram describes it as a ladder to reach the Lord.

Tute mayajal bighade bhawasindhu

The mesh of illusion is cut asunder
And the ocean of life evaporates,
When one is attached to the Name of the Lord,
Through rites and rituals, in this Kaliyug,
Which mighty one has ever been saved ?
No need to read the Vedas,

No point in the study of scriptures;
 Repeat constantly the Name of the Lord.
 Waste not time on yogic practices,
 Nor resort to renunciation;
 In the company of the Saints,
 Tread the golden path of devotion.
 Involve yourself not in religious ceremonies,
 Nor be concerned with the knowledge of Brahm.
 Make the Lord's glory your ladder to ascend.
 This secret has been revealed by Saints, O Tuka;
 Save this, there is no path to eternal peace.

Mass Impact of Saints and Sufies

The medieval Indian saints in Maharashtra exercised great harmonising influence on the people belonging to all categories and communities. As in Northern India, so in Maharashtra, saints and sufis made strenuous efforts for the unification of Hinduism and Islam. The well-known scholar, Mahadeo Govind Ranade writes :

"The strict monotheism of Islam had entered the hearts of Saints like Kabir and Nanak. The worshippers of Dattatraya (the Hindu Trinity) often dressed their god in a way similar to that of a Mussalman Faqueer. The same influence was working on the minds of the people of Maharashtra even more forcefully. Brahmin and non-Brahmin preachers both exhorted the people to believe in the oneness of God."

Chhatrapati Shivaji and his followers also showed great reverence to Muslim saints and made generous endowments to Muslim Shrines.⁵

To the poet-saints of Maharashtra goes the credit of loosening the social and religious barriers and bringing the Maratha people closer together. The poet-saints, movement

of Maharashtra dates back to the days of Jnandeo (d. A.D. 1296). He says :

“Men are not great by birth. In the eyes of God all are one, never ask a man's caste.”

This rational explanation of society and firm faith in the basic qualities of men of all classes permeated the entire country. The centre of the Bhakti movement was Pandharpur.

There came the poet-saints of Maharashtra to worship at the shrine of Vithoba. The preachings of these saints were centered on the idea that all men could gain salvation by giving up false class values and caste-ridden orthodoxy and worshipping the god Vithoba with single-minded devotion. People made pilgrimages to Pandharpur and to Alandi and discussed the teachings of the poet-saints. This appealed to them because of their simplicity and, when they returned to their respective villages, they disseminated the ideas among their fellows. So the Bhakti-cult or Bhagwat Dharma, as it is otherwise called grew in strength. It reached its zenith with the greatest Maratha saint Tukaram (b. A.D. 1608). The other powerful influence during this period was the preaching of the poet-saint Ramdas who urged the urgency and importance of *Swarajya* for the Maratha people.

So Maharashtra achieved a new religion, more rational and more appealing to the common man. It also gave to the country a new literature and a language which the people could understand. The Marathas found themselves drawn together by common tradition, common language, common literature, common religion and common race. These factors were responsible for the new political upheaval. The Marathas aspired to become a strong political power and Shivaji fulfilled the urge.

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Chapter Two

Appears A Hero

The Family Background

Maloji, the grandfather of Shivaji, was a General at the Court of Ahmednagar holding the command of 5,000 horses and enjoying a fief. His wife Deepabai was the daughter of a small Maratha noble. Although they were married for many years, the couple felt lonely because they had no child, while Maloji's younger brother was blessed with eight sons. To Deepabai, an orthodox Hindu wife, this indicated a lack of adequate blessings from the gods. She made endless vows to numerous deities in her prayer for a male child. She made pilgrimages to many important sacred places but for a long time her prayers and pilgrimages remained unrewarded. At last she made a vow at the shrine of the Muslim Saint Shah Sharaff, whose *Dargah* was in Ahmednagar. Then a miracle happened. Maloji and his wife Deepabai believed it was a blessing of the Muslim saint which had given them a son, in time two sons. They named their first son Shahji and their second son Sharaffji, after the Saint Shah Sharaffji. It is also

recorded that Maloji had accepted Sheikh Mohammad, the *mujawir* of the Dargah, as his guru.

In those days the Hindus recognised the value of a vow made at a Muslim Shrine and contemporary tradition records that Shivaji's father Shahji was born out of a prayer offered at the Shrine of a Muslim saint.¹

Maloji was a soldier of fortune. Like all his ancestors, since their flight from Udaipur, he also chose to offer his sword to the King of Ahmednagar. He was received with favour. He married the daughter of a prominent courtier at the Ahmednagar Court.

There were many Maratha chiefs at Ahmednagar. Among them was a wealthy landlord called Lakhoji, who was a leading personage in the Hindu community in the city of Ahmednagar. On the occasion of great festivals he would throw open his house and grounds to the people for celebrating the festival. In spring of 1599 they were celebrating Holi, the Hindu festival of spring in Lakhoji's house. Dancing-boys with bells at their ankles stamped their feet in time round the courtyard of the house and chanted hymns to the spirit of fertility while trumpets and fifes played cheerfully. The guests were shouting and sprinkling coloured water over each other's bright clothes. Such is the tradition of this festival. Generally the children sat solemnly against the carved pillars of the arcade that ran around three sides of the courtyard and joyously watched the unusual lavishness of their parents, an odd departure from the formality and gravity of Hindu life. On this occasion, however, Jijabai the five-year-old daughter of the host began to mimic the grown-up guests high spirited games. Young Shahji imitated her and splashed water over the girl dressed in green and white. Soon the two children drenched each other's clothes. As they stood laughing, bright eyes flushed, Lakhoji passed by and was moved at their happiness. "What a charming couple !" he said.

Maloji at once called the attention of every one present to his host's exclamation, which he interpreted as a proposal to betroth the two children. Such early betrothals, years before the actual wedding, are common enough in India; and etiquette is very strict on the fulfilment of all promises of betrothal.

Lakhoji, and his chief Hindu nobles at the Ahmednagar court would not have dreamed of betrothing his daughter to the son of a soldier of fortune. He was appalled at the meaning read into his light humorous words. He tried to laugh the matter off, but next morning Maloji sent him a formal request to confirm his proposal. Lakhoji refused and Maloji professing indignation at the insult challenged him to a duel.

The King of Ahmednagar heard about the quarrel. He did not want to lose either Lakhoji, a loyal noble, or Maloji, a capable soldier. So with the amiable caprice of a Sultan he raised Maloji to the command of 5000 horses and gave him a fief.²

Shahji, father of Shivaji, followed his father Maloji in the service of Ahmednagar. However, in 1636 the Kingdom of Ahmednagar collapsed and Shahji enlisted in the armies of Bijapur. His possession of the fief granted to his father Maloji was reaffirmed by his new master.

On account of none-to-warm relationship with her husband, Jijabai's nature had become very much hardened. She was embittered by her trials. She did not conceal her disquiet.

Shahji summoned her to Bijapur not for the sake of her company but because she would bring their son Shivaji with her. Shahji felt responsible for the upbringing of his son and wanted him to have a suitable career in the Bijapur service where his own influence could ensure him proper advancement. Moreover, there was Shivaji's marriage to be arranged. Jijabai protested that she could not give consent to her son's marriage in Bijapur.

Mother and father quarrelled for their son's allegiance. But Shivaji could not be separated from his mother. He hardly knew his father and all the rigid Hindu tradition of unquestioning obedience to the head of the family counted for nothing against the memory of his mother's devotion to him. Shahji was torn between two feelings for his stubborn son. He admired the extraordinary intelligence of the boy. For Shivaji, instead of playing with other boys, would pester his father with questions about affairs of the State, methods of administration; and the management of armies. At the same time he was exasperated by Shivaji's disrespect for Bijapur authority.

One day Shahji took his son to pay his respect to Sultan. This was his first move to introduce his son into the life of the Court. They entered the Court gate of the palace and passed through the outer Courts to the Darbar Hall.

In the Darbar Hall, the Sultan of Bijapur sat on a low throne, one leg crossed under him, the other leg stretched with the foot resting on a globe. In one hand he held a golden key, in the other a sword.

As the courtiers in turn approached the throne they prostrated themselves, bowing their foreheads to the carpet. Shahji followed their example but his young son Shivaji without bowing saluted the Sultan with the Maratha Salam, such as he had seen his own people greet their superiors in villages, throughout the hill country - with the simple manly gesture of raising both hands, with palms together, to the level of the chin. Shivaji could not be persuaded to approach the Sultan's throne in the prescribed manner and it is said that only the high favour, which his father then enjoyed at Court, saved Shivaji from punishment.

After this regrettable incident Shahji began to lose interest in the child and it was clear, he would never be a success in Court. He seemed to have inherited more than a fair share of his mother's character. So Shivaji was left more and more to

himself and to his mother. If Shahji had taken little more trouble for his son and had set himself to influence him through affection and sympathy; then Shivaji would probably have surrendered in time to the charm of feudal life of Bijapur. But how could that be? Destiny had assigned to Shivaji a far more nobler task of carving a kingdom for the Maratha people.

Shahji felt that his position was damaged by his son's defiant behaviour. He ordered Jijabai to take Shivaji away from Bijapur and to return to their ancestral State. It was enough if Shivaji looked after the palaces and temples of the state.

Shivaji was now 19. He had full confidence in himself and he did not reveal his plans to anyone. Dadaji his teacher and guardian appointed by his father Shahji, found in him a promising youth of fine character. In the service of the Darbar, he could be a noted soldier like his father and grand-father and rise to the highest post of command. To any man of the world an independent Maratha kingdom would have just been a fantastic and delightful dream.

In spite of this attitude towards Shahji, the clue to Shivaji's amazing success, is to be found in the pioneer work done by his father, Shahji.

Among the pioneers of the Maratha freedom movement, Shivaji's father Shahji occupies an important place. Both, directly and indirectly, he contributed to the marvellous success of his gifted son in the foundation of Swarajya. He provided Shivaji with an impregnable base in the Western Ghats for his early operations. When Shahji sent his young son Shivaji to take charge of his Jagir in Pune, it seems he consciously provided him with a cabinet worthy of an independent King. Shamrao Nilkanth Ranjherkar was appointed as the Peshwa (Prime Minister), Balakrishna Hanumante was Muzumdar (Accountant General), Sonaji Pant was Dabir (Secretary), and Raghunath Ballal was Sabnis (Paymaster). Besides these four trained and tried high-ranking officials, there was Dadaji

Konddeo, a veteran administrator, who was charged with the duty and responsibility of guardian and tutor.

Another direct inheritance of the son from the father was a grand lesson in strategy. As in Maharashtra, so also in Karnataka, Shahji had made a chain of forts connected with a fortified port, the basis of his power, so that he could escape by sea if overwhelmed on land. Shivaji adopted and perfected the same polity for his own self-defence and aggressive movements.

Indirectly, Shahji inspired his son by his own dignified conduct in his dealings with Nizamshahis of Ahmednagar and the Adil Shahis of Bijapur. With the Nizamshahi his role was that of a kingmaker. When that kingdom was extinguished in 1636 by the joint action of the Mughals and the Adil Shah of Bijapur, Shahji was obliged to transfer his allegiance to the Court of Bijapur. But then he did two things, both of which proved to be of great significance in the history of Swarajya. Firstly, he insisted on and retained his Jagir in Pune, which subsequently became the cradle of Swarajya. Secondly, he consented to move off to the far south, away from Court intrigues to find a new career of semi-independence. He acquired considerable territory in Karnatka. Later, Shivaji strove hard to bring it into his own possession and named it Swarajya, which significantly served as a place of refuge to the third Maratha King, Rajaram, in the hour of his distress.

Early Activities

Shahji had left Pune *jagir* to his senior wife Jijabai and his minor son Shivaji. Shivaji showed his mettle when at a young age of 18 he overran a number of hill forts near Pune-Raigarh, Kondana and Toran in the years 1645-47. On the death of his guardian, Dadaji Konddeo in 1647, Shivaji became his own master and the full control of his father's *jagir* passed under him. Shivaji began his real career of conquest in 1656 when he

conquered Javeli. Among the Maratha noblemen in the service of the Adil Shahi kingdom, who fought against Shivaji, may be mentioned the Pandhars, the Kharates, the Mores, the Surves, the Ghateges, the Ghorpades and the Sawants of Wadi. Most of these families trace their ancestories to one of the well-known 96 Kashatriya clans of the Marathas. The Bhosle family, to which Shivaji belonged, was one of these 96 clans. The Maratha noblemen were not prepared to treat him as an independent king or Raja. The exchange of hot words that passed between Shivaji and Krishnarao More of Javeli before the former invaded Javeli, may be taken to represent the feelings of the Maratha nobility towards Shivaji. Before attacking Javeli Shivaji sent a message to its *Jagirdar*, Krishnarao More, Stating : "You unnecessarily style yourself as Raja; the god Shambhu Mahadev has made me king. You should, therefore, cease to style yourself as Raja. You should better enjoy your *jagir* by agreeing to serve me. Should you fail to do this and plot against me by being disloyal, I will conquer Javeli and imprison you." To this, Krishnarao replied : "You have become king just yesterday. Who has made you King? Should anybody style himself as King within the four walls of his house, who would call him King ? If you have any strength in you do come to Javeli today instead of tomorrow." The challenges and counter-challenges speak volumes for the rivalry that existed between Shivaji and the contemporary Maratha Nobility.

The answer of Krishnarao More infuriated Shivaji. He attacked Javeli and after a fierce fight captured the fort and the Javeli territory. The Javeli territory and the accumulated treasure of the Mores proved a great asset to Shivaji. The conquest of Javeli made Shivaji undisputed Master of the Mauli area, strengthened his hands and freed his path to the Satara area and to the coastal strip, the Konkan. Mauli foot soldiers became a strong force of his army. With their help, he further strengthened his position by acquiring a series of hill-forts near Pune.

Shivaji started his political career during the reign of Mohammad Adil Shah of Bijapur (AD 1627-1657) when his kingdom had reached the zenith of its splendour. Shivaji gathered around him a band of young men inspired by the high ideal of founding the *Swaraj* of the Marathas. He was much influenced in this choice of career by the preaching of his mother, Jijabai, and the training of his tutor Dadaji Kondadeo who had assiduously nursed the young hero's mind. The example of his father too, in carving out such a significant career for himself, was before young Shivaji, and he became fired, with an urge to do better than his father and create an independent kingdom of his own.

Shivaji first captured the fort of Sinhgarh sometime in AD 1644. Next he took Rohilda built in Rajgarh and set himself over all parts of Shahji's Western *jagir* under his own control so as to form a compact state ruled by one authority. He easily captured Chakan and named it Sangram Durg and placed his own garrison there. He also occupied the Purandhar, Indapur, Baramati and Vijay Durg areas. Simultaneously he brought about administrative consolidation of his newly acquired territory and called upon the *Deshmukhs* in Adil Shahi services to join his standard. Those, like the Mores of Javeli, who resisted this call, were routed.

In this struggle for Maratha *Swaraj* which Shivaji had launched, he had to face the challenge of Adil Shahi authority and the might of Mughal Empire. Afzal Khan, the Bijapur General, was allowed to chastise Shivaji in AD 1659. The Mughals now joined Bijapur in an attempt to exterminate Shivaji.

Afzal Khan and Shivaji

Invasion of Bijapur territories and the capture of various hill fortresses by Shivaji hastened the march of the Bijapur General, Afzal Khan, to chastise Shivaji. Shahji, father of

Shivaji, who was still serving the Bijapur Court, was arrested and put into prison for the rebellion of his son.

Shivaji resumed his career of conquest at the expense of Bijapur. He burst into the Konkan, the coastal strip between the Ghats and the sea and seized the Northern part of it as he also conquered a number of other hill-forts. Bijapur now decided to take stern action. They sent against Shivaji a premier noble, Afzal Khan. The Governor of the Deccan also marched at the head of 10,000 troops with instruction to capture Shivaji by any means possible. Shivaji's forces were not used to open fighting and shrank from an open contest with this powerful chief. Afzal Khan sent an invitation to Shivaji for personal interview and promised him to get pardon from the Bijapur Court. Convinced that this was a trap, Shivaji decided to meet Afzal Khan.

By the term of the interview, Afzal Khan and Shivaji were each to be accompanied by three men only. Afzal Khan rightly estimated that his own strength together with that of his swordsmen would be more than a match for anything that Shivaji could produce. Exulting, he hastened towards the place of meeting, guided by the Brahmin envoy he had sent to Shivaji. They passed along the road Shivaji had laid out through the forest, watched by hundreds of eyes. If he heard a crack of dry twigs he must have assumed that some wild creature had darted back into safety from the noise of men.

At the meeting place, a great tent had been erected, furnished with carpets and silken cushions. Afzal Khan entered the tent with his followers. Shivaji approached and then seeing the swordsman Bandu stopped dead. Why did the Bijapur embassy need a noted swordsman in its train, he inquired. He offered to dismiss one of his own attendants if Afzal Khan would leave Bandhu outside the tent. Afzal Khan seemed determined to pick a quarrel at once. Without even referring to the purpose of his mission he began loudly to complain that it

was intorelable to find a petty landowner's son aping the airs of a prince, furnishing a tent so luxuriously. Shivaji replied that the cushions and carpets were there not for his own comfort but as a compliment to the distinguished envoy from Bijapur. For the moment Afzal Khan seem satisfied. He nodded slowly and opened his arms to offer Shivaji the embrace customarily exchanged between opposing leaders at a peace conference. Shivaji stepped forward to accept the embrace. He was more than a head shorter than Afzal Khan. As soon as they were locked in an embrace the Khan moved his arm up Shivaji's back and clutched him round the neck. It was a wreslters grip. As soon as Shivaji felt that strong arm closed suddenly upon his neck, he wriggled in the grasp of Afzal Khan, but the grip only tightned. He would have been swung clear off his feet had he not with a sudden snake-like movement twisted round, got his right arm free and dug the steel tiger-claws concealed in the palm of his left hand deep in Afzal Khan's back. Then with his right hand he drew his scorpion dagger from his belt and drove it into Afzal Khan's side. The Afghan Staggered back, shouting with rage and pain. His attendants came running up, as did also Shivaji's. There was a short fight between the two parties, but the Bijapuris were hampered by their desire to get their wounded leader away to his camp. They carried him to his palanquin, parrying the blows of the Marathas as they ran. The Marathas slashed at their legs to make them drop their burden. Shivaji and one of his attendants cut down the great swordsman, Bandu. One by one the other attendants of Afzal Khan were wounded or killed. Then a Maratha cut off Afzal Khan's head and lifted it up in triumph.

Shivaji stopped to blow his horn. In the narrow defile of the hills, from cliff and scarp, it echoed and re-echoed. The Marathas concealed in the labyrinth of the forest heard it and seized their arms. From the fort of Pratapgarh, overlooking the scene of the meeting, a great gun boomed. Trumpets roared the tunes 'battle-pear' and, 'lance in rest', the Marathas poured

through the woods to fling themselves on the invaders among the foothills. The main body of the Bijapur army was still ignorant of the fate of Afzal Khan. Many of the horsemen had dismounted to rest in the shade, the guns were unmanned and the sentries bobbing. The Maratha attack was a complete surprise. Horse and foot were swept away in confusion. Camels plunged panic-stricken through the ranks. War elephants trumpeted dismally uncertain and alarmed, till the Marathas dashed at them, hacked at their legs and trunks and sent them stumbling in terror through the jungle. The Bijapur captains were helpless to curb the rout. Their voices were drowned in the tumult. They were whirled away in the torrent of their fleeing army. Whole companies were dispersed over the hills, returning days later in twos and threes, startled and distraught, to throw themselves on Shivaji's mercy.

Even at this delirious moment of victory, Shivaji's orders were obeyed. All who surrendered were spared. All women and children, priests, camp-followers and non-combatants were sent to their homes in safety. Even the captive soldiers were not retained. Officers and men alike were brought before Shivaji, who sympathised with them in their misfortune, loaded them with money, food and clothing and set them free.

Clement to the defeated enemy, Shivaji was munificent to his own victorious troops. So immense was the booty that he could afford to be generous. All the Bijapur artillery ammunition, transport animals, luggage and treasure had fallen into his hands - four thousand horses and sixty-five elephants and twelve hundred camels. To the widows of the Marathas who had fallen, Shivaji allotted pensions; to the wounded, prizes of treasure; to the officers who had distinguished themselves, elephants, jewels and robes of honour. At this most critical occasion of encounter with Afzal Khan, Shivaji had Siddi Ibrahim, A Muslim bodyguard with him. It is again notable that Afzal Khan had Shankaraji Mohite and Pillaji Mohite, the two Marathas, as his confidants. The enmity was political and not religious. Their outlook was secular.

When the news of the rout reached Bijapur there was consternation and bitter grief. The whole Court went into mourning. The Queen-Mother shut herself in a room and refused to eat or drink. She only emerged from her seclusion to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

For the moment it seemed as if even Bijapur city itself would fall to the Marathas and the panic that reigned there was as great as at the approach of the Mughals. But there was no chance that where the siege engines of Aurangzeb had failed, Shivaji's hill-men would succeed. Moreover, though Bijapur was never again able to challenge Shivaji's independence, her wealth now saved her from further humiliation. She could buy armies and artillery to replace those that had been lost. New regiments of mercenaries were recruited and a capable Abyssinian condottiere, Siddi Johar, was given command of the army. Shivaji, who had ventured with insufficient forces into the heart of Bijapur territory, was surprised by Siddi Johar and retreating to Panhala Fort was there invested. Once again he resorted to diplomacy. He offered to surrender but on the following day. It is almost incredible that Siddi Johar should have paid any attention to this obviously frivolous offer; but apparently he did, for he agreed to the proposal. And of course, in the night, the investing force relaxed their vigilance in anticipation of the morrow's armistice. Shivaji slipped out of the town with a few followers and galloped North to the defile of Rangana where there was a Maratha force.

Instead of pressing on the siege of Panhala, which in the absence of Shivaji would probably have capitulated, the Abyssinian, furious at the trick played on him, raised the siege and followed Shivaji to Rangana. The body of Marathas posted at Rangana was far too small to engage the whole Bijapur army with any possibility of success. But while Shivaji continued his retreat to join the main Maratha army many miles to the rear, he gave the command of the Rangana force to Baji Prabhu (who had formerly been steward to More) and ordered him to

hold the defile till he heard a gunshot which would announce Shivaji's safe arrival.

Baji had only a few hundred hill-men to defend the pass with. He made them pile up a barricade of stones across the mouth of the defile. Behind that they waited for the Bijapur army to attack. All day the heavy cavalry of Bijapur clashed against the band of hill-men who, falling one by one, never retreated by one step from the position Shivaji had ordered them to hold. Their Commander, Baji, was severely wounded; but even as he lay in agony he cried out continuous encouragement to his men. Towards evening when there seemed no hope of further resistance, they heard the distant shot of a gun that told them Shivaji was safe. Bearing their dying commander on a stretcher, the Marathas fell back from the defile, not even molested in their retreat by the exhausted enemy.

The defence of Ranganah has become legendary in Western India. The action is remarkable as an example of the spirit which Shivaji's leadership had infused into his followers. A band of despised hill-men, hitherto resigned to submission, had stood up to the attack of vastly superior forces.

The war, thereafter, languished. It was obvious that Bijapur would never be able to subdue Shivaji, nor could the Marathas at this stage hope to take Bijapur. But the power of Bijapur was broken and Shivaji was willing to make peace on condition of the recognition of his independence. Negotiations for permanent peace were opened in 1662. The envoy chosen by the Bijapur Government was Shivaji's own father Shahji.

Shahji had neglected his son during his childhood; a troublesome boy had grown into a wild rebel whose activities had led to his father's imprisonment; but now the difficult child had become a conqueror and an independent prince, a hero to his countrymen.

The meeting between father and son must have been curious. They had not met since Shivaji was nineteen. Now he was a warrior of note, his face already lined and hardened. Instead of the rustic tunic he wore when Jijabai brought him to Bijapur he was clothed now like a prince. For all his father's former indifference to him, Shivaji treated the old man with wonderful courtesy. As a boy he had refused to bow before the Sultan of Bijapur, but now that he was more feared than the Sultan, he approached his father with hands clasped humbly under his chin, prostrated himself at the full length and laid his forehead upon his feet. Bursting into tears Shahji raised his son and embraced him. Shivaji had ordered a palanquin of princely magnificence for his father but he himself walked barefoot beside the palanquin. He led his father to a great pavilion where a banquet was prepared, but he refused to sit with his father, contenting himself with standing meekly before him. His father asked him to sit beside him. Shivaji replied, "Not till you have forgiven me for having been the cause of your imprisonment by the Sultan." So they were reconciled and sat down to the banquet together.

Shahji had been given full powers as plenipotentiary by the Bijapur Government. All Shivaji's demands were met. His independence was conceded and he was recognised as a Ruler of all the coastal territory from Bombay to Goa, of all the forts that he had captured and of the Deccan plateau as far East as Indapur.

When this treaty was concluded Shahji returned to Bijapur and resumed his office under the Sultan. He never saw his son again. He was killed not long after in an accident in the hunting field.

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2. Dennis Kinkaid : *GRAND REBEL*, p. 28-29.

Chapter Three

Shivaji and The Mughals

The cause of the Mughal Maratha conflict may be found in the growing hostile attitude which the Delhi adopted against Shivaji and the restrictions which Delhi sought to impose on him in the affair of the Siddis of Janjira.

"Shivaji must have been making intense preparations for the coming conflict with the Imperial army. He could not have struck at them at a more appropriate time. There was continuous unrest among the Afghan tribes on the border requiring the vigilant attention of the Emperor. There was trouble too, in the Jat community around Mathura. Prince Muazzam as Viceroy at Aurangabad was not bursting with energy.

The fury and vigour of Shivaji's attack was a totally unexpected one for the Mughals. Fort after fort fell to the Marathas. Simhgaad, Porandar, Rohida, Lohagad and Mahuli were captured by Shivaji within six months.

Shivaji's Conflict with the Empire

Shahji, the father of Shivaji, was jagirdar in the district of Pune. He was too much absorbed in the state affairs of Bijapur

so he transferred his Pune Jagir to his son. It was a coincidence that the district of Pune was ceded by Bijapur to the Mughals by the treaty of 1657. This made Shivaji a subject of Mughal Empire. This also brought him in conflict with Delhi.

Shivaji raided the Mughal territory at Ahmednagar, a feudatory of Bijapur, and seized the Kalyan-Bhiwandi region which was also under the Mughals by the provision of the above treaty. Aurangzeb seems to have become aware of the danger coming from the rising power of Shivaji.

Shivaji, by now, eliminated Afzal Khan, defeated the army of Bijapur and captured the strategic fort of Panhala above the Ghats and South Konkan in the coastal region. Alarmed at this menace Bijapur requested Delhi for assistance to counter the moves of Shivaji.

Delhi directed Shaista Khan to recover the territories seized by Shivaji. Shaista Khan commanded an army almost 50 to 75 thousand strong. The problem with Shaista Khan was as to how to employ this enormous army against the tiny territory of Shivaji's difficult terrain and an elusive enemy. Shaista Khan captured some forts of Shivaji including the costly capture of Chakan.

Shaista Khan stationed himself and his army at Pune for a long time. He succeeded in winning over a number of Shivaji's men by promises of high rank in Mughal service. The Maratha garrison at Simhagadh showed signs of going over to the Mughals. Shivaji could not look at the happenings helplessly. He decided to act. Then came the daring attack on Shaista Khan on the night of 5th April, 1663. The attack was a complete success. Shaista Khan lost a few fingers and escaped. The daring of Shivaji resounded in the Mughal Empire. Shaista Khan was disgraced and transferred to Bengal.

Shivaji took bold action by raiding the prosperous city of Surat situated on the Tapti river. The city was plundered.

Shivaji got enormous wealth out of the loot. This provided the much needed funds to face the wars against the Mughals. Aurangzeb became desperate. He now sent Mirza Raja Jai Singh, his foremost general and strategist against Shivaji. Jai Singh proved a most competent general. His troop dispositions, his unceasing raids on Shivaji's territory, his complete blockade of Shivaji's movement and tactful warning to Bijapur to keep away from entanglement, brought him success.

Jai Singh decided to strike at the heart of Shivaji's territory, at Fort Purandar where Shivaji has lodged his family and his treasure. Jai Singh besieged (1665) it, beating off all Maratha attempts to relieve it. With the fall of the fort inside and no relief likely from any quarter, Shivaji opened negotiations with Jai Singh. After hard bargaining the following terms were agreed upon :

(i) Out of 35 forts held by Shivaji, 23 forts with surrounding territory yielding a revenue of 4 lakhs of huns (Rs. 20 lakhs) every year were to be surrendered to the Mughals, while the remaining 12 forts with an annual income of one lakh of huns were to be left to Shivaji "on condition of service and loyalty of the throne."

(ii) Territory worth 4 lakhs of huns a year in the Bijapur-Konkan which Shivaji had already held was granted to him. In addition, the Bijapur territory worth 9 lakhs of huns a year in the uplands (Balaghat) which Shivaji was to conquer, was also granted to him. In return for these, he was to pay 40 lakhs huns in 13 yearly instalments to the Mughals.

Shivaji asked to be excused from personal service. Hence a Mansab of 5000 was granted in his place to his minor son Sambhaji. Shivaji promised, however, to join personally in any Mughal campaign in the Deccan. Jai Singh cleverly threw a bone of contention between Shivaji and the Bijapur Darbar. But the success of Jai Singh's scheme depended upon Mughal support to Shivaji in making up from Bijapur territory worth

the amount he had yielded to the Mughals. Aurangzeb had not lost his reservation about Shivaji and was doubtful of the wisdom of a joint Mughal and Maratha attack on Bijapur but Jai Singh considered the alliance with Shivaji the starting point of the conquest of Bijapur and the entire Deccan and once this had been done Shivaji would have no option but to remain an ally of the Mughals. Jai Singh wrote to Aurangzeb, "we shall be having Shivaji in like the centre of a circle."

Aurangzeb having appointed Jai Singh as Governor of the Deccan directed him to attack Bijapur. Shivaji was associated with the Mughal campaign against Bijapur for a brief period of three months. Shivaji and his Sarlashkar Netaji Palkar, during this brief period reduced Phaltan, Nangalbadha, Thatwada and Khalav and captured these towns and territories around them. Aurangzeb acknowledged the services of Shivaji. But the main army under Jai Singh had to give a hard battle against the army of Bijapur lead by Sher Khan, Abul Mohammad, Khawaskhan, Kalyanrao Jadhav and Vynkoji Bhosle, younger brother of Shivaji. Thus the Marathas were fighting against Marathas and the Mughals were fighting against the Pathans.

Bijapur had followed a scorched-earth policy. For miles and miles around Bijapur there were neither trees nor grass or fodder, nor water in wells. Provisions were neither available for men nor for beasts. Reinforcements from Golconda also joined the Bijapur army. Bijapur Generals covered themselves with glory in this campaign.

Alamgirnama states that scarcity of provisions and want of heavy artillery, forced Raja Jai Singh to retreat. On the 11th January, 1666 Jai Singh camped on the river Bhima. At this time, Shivaji took leave of Jai Singh and left for Panhala.

To resist Shivaji's activities in the Panhala - Vishalgad region, the Adilshah of Bijapur sent Siddi Masud, Abdul Aziz and Rustom Zaman. Amongst the three, Rustam Zaman was a great friend of Shivaji. Shivaji was pressed hard but escaped

due to the friendship of Rustam Zaman. Rustam Zaman recaptured all the lost Bijapur territories including Kudal, Pedne, Phonda, Bhatgram and Sattara and brought these once more under the rule of Adil Shah. "However, to show his friendship he handed over Rangana to Shivaji, much to the annoyance of Adil Shah.

Shivaji and Rustam Zaman were such great friends that on an earlier occasion when Shivaji's Maratha General Doroji attacked Rajapur, which was under the command of Rustam Zaman, Shivaji not only restored the town to Rustam Zaman but deprived Doroji of his command. Being in the opposite camps did not, in the least, affect their mutual regard and friendship.

Jai Singh had imposed very hard conditions on Shivaji. He was now left only with a small part of his territory and that too was a Jagir from the Emperor. Territory in the Adil Shahi Tal Konkan under Shivaji's possession came to be considered as a part of the Mughal Empire. In his *Farman* of September 5, 1665¹, Aurangzeb had thus to say :

"I also order that in respect of the Mahals yielding a revenue of nine lakhs of huns consisting of (a) Mahals worth four lakhs of huns in Bijapuri Tal Konkan which are in your possession and which have been included in my empire on account of your being enrolled among my mansabadars and (b) Mahals yielding five lakhs of huns in Bijapur Balaghat subject to the condition that you conquer them before my projected campaign against Bijapur, and whenever Jai Singh would invade Bijapur, you would, at the head of a proper contingent of your own troops, cooperate most heartily with him and give him satisfaction by the excellence of your service and further that you will remain in fidelity, devotion and obedience and pay the tribute you have agreed to. You would be confined in these Mahals worth nine lakhs of huns a year."

Jai Singh informed the Emperor, He (Shivaji) has reached my camp on 27th September, and welcomed the Imperial *Farman*. He promised to accompany me in the Bijapur expedition with the troops of his son's *mansab*, and in addition, seven thousand expert infantry.

Manucci, the author of the '*Storia De Mogor*² who accompanied Jai Singh in this campaign records of his meeting with Shivaji : "When in came Shivaji the Raja (Jai Singh), his Brahmin and I, we all rose up, and Shivaji seeing me, a youth well-favoured of body, whom he had not beheld on other occasions, asked Raja Jai Singh of what country I was ? The Raja Jai Singh replied that I was a Farangi Raja. He wondered at such an answer that he had in his service many Farangis but they were not of this style I gave him information about the greatness of European Kings, he being of opinion that there was not in Europe any other King than the King of Portugal. I also talked to him about our religion."

Shivaji's visit to Agra

Jai Singh in his despatches to the Emperor suggested: "Now that Adilshah and Qutubshah have united in mischief it is necessary to win Shivaji's heart by all means. I am sending him to Northern India to have audience of Your Majesty."³

Jai Singh succeeded in persuading Shivaji to visit Agra. Before his departure, Shivaji went round his kingdom. He instructed his *killedars* to remain ever vigilant. His mother Jijabai was entrusted with the administration. She was to be assisted by the Peshwa Moropant Pingle, the Majumdar Dilo Samdar and the General Prataprao Gujar.

Shivaji left Raigad on March 5, 1666. Jai Singh gave Shivaji a most solemn guarantee that no harm would come to Shivaji. Jai Singh's son Kumar Ramsingh, who was at Agra, was to watch the safety of Shivaji during his stay at Agra.

Aurangzeb advanced a sum of one lakh rupees for Shivaji's expenses for the journey to Agra. The sum was to be drawn from the Imperial treasury at Aurangabad on his way to Agra.

According to the historian Bhimsen Saksena : "When Shivaji approached Aurangabad he had with him five hundred horsemen riding on splendidly equipped horses. He had also an infantry of five hundred similarly equipped. He was accompanied by a modest but dignified and efficient contingent of officials.

On the way to Agra Shivaji received the following communication from Aurangzeb, dated April 5, 1666.

"The letter which you addressed to me reports your having started by the advice of Mirza Raja — has been placed before me. It has become the cause of increasing my favours towards you. Come here without delay in full confidence in my grace and perfect composure of mind. After you have obtained audience of me you will be glorified with my royal favours and given permission to return home. I am herewith sending a resplendent Khilat (robe) as a mark of Honour. Written on 10th Shawal, 9th Regnal Year, through Jafar Khan."⁴

According to Rajasthan records, Shivaji's arrival at Agra was scheduled on May 11, 1660. "A letter written by Kumar Ram Singh to Shivaji has been sent, saying that he should arrive on 11 May and have his audience of the Emperor."

The Emperor had ordered that the Kumar and Faulad Khan should go out on one days march from Agra, and welcome Shivaji in advance and conduct him (to the capital). So he will be presented at the Court on 11th May.

Regarding Shivaji's interview with Aurangzeb the Rajasthani Record 24 state : "The Kumar and Mukhlis Khan

were conducting Shivaji (to the Court). In the meanwhile the Emperor had left the Diwan-i-am and was sitting in the Diwan-i-khas. Shivaji went to the latter place. The Emperor ordered Asad Khan Bakshi to bring Shiva (ji) forward and present him for audience. Asad Khan conducted him to the Emperor. Shivaji presented one thousand Mohars and rupees two thousand as *Nazar* and rupees five thousand as *Nisar* (*nyochhawar*). Sambhaji, the son of Shivaji, was then presented to the Emperor and he offered five hundred *mohars* and rupees one thousand as *Nazar* and rupees two thousand as *Nisar*. Shivaji was made to stand in place of Tahir Khan, in front of Raja Rai Singh. The Emperor neither talked with him nor addressed any words to him.

"It was the Emperor's birthday and the betel leaves (ceremonial paan) were distributed to the princes and the nobles and hence Shivaji too got one. Next the Khilats (Robes) for the occasion were presented to the princes, Jafar Khan and Raja Jaswant Singh. At this Shivaji became sad and fretful; he flew into a rage and his eyes were filled with tears. The Emperor noticed it and told the Kumar, "Ask Shivaji what ails him?" Then the Kumar came to Shivaji's side and the latter said, "You are seeing, your father has seen, your Padshah has seen what a man I am, and you have deliberately kept me standing so long. I cast off your *mansab*. If you wanted me to stand, you should have done so according to the right order of precedence." He then and there turned his back and began to walk away violently from his place in the line of noblemen. Then the Kumar seized his hand. But Shivaji wrenched it away, came to one side and sat down. The Kumar followed him to that place and again tried to persuade him, but he would not listen, and cried out, 'My death day has arrived. Cut off my head and take it there if you like, but I am not going (back) to the Emperor's presence.'

"As Shivaji would not be persuaded, the Kumar went upto the Emperor and reported (the case) to him. The Emperor

ordered Multafatkhan, Aquil Khan and Mukhils Khan to go, console Shivaji and invest him with a Khil'at and then bring him to the throne. Three nobles came and asked Shivaji to wear the Khil'at but he replied, "I refuse to accept a Khil'at. The Emperor has purposely made me stand below Jaswant Singh. I am such a man and yet I am deliberately kept standing. I decline the Emperor's *mansab*. I will not be his servant. Kill me, imprison me, if you like, but I will not wear the Khilat. So they returned and reported all this to the Emperor, who ordered the Kumar to take Shivaji himself to his own residence and persuade him. The Kumar took Shivaji along with himself to his residence, seated him in his private chamber and reasoned with him, but he would not listen. After keeping him for about half an hour with himself the Kumar dismissed Shivaji to his own Camp."

Alamgirnama, an official chronicle of Aurangzeb's reign, also records, "Shivaji reached the Court and paid his respects. He approached the Emperor. He stood in a place suitable for those who were near the throne and shoulder to shoulder with high noblemen. It had been decided by the Emperor on that day that he (Shivaji) should be given great consideration. For some days he should pay respects at the Court and receive kind favours (from the Emperor) and achieving his aims and desires, soon receive leave to depart."

According to *Alamgirnama*, Shivaji arrived in Agra on 11 May, 1666, and escaped from Agra on 19 August, 1666.

Shivaji fell from the grace of the Emperor. His life was in constant danger. Rajasthan letter of 29 May states that, "I hear that Shivaji has paid some money to Jafarkhan to win his support....." The letter of 20 May states: Jafarkhan presented Shivaji's petition to the Emperor whereupon he was pardoned for his offences and spared his life."

The Rajasthan letter of 29 May, 1666 states: "Shivaji has written a petition to the Emperor and submitted through

Mohammad Amin Khan as his mediator in which he states, "If Your Majesty restores to me all my forts taken by you, I shall pay you two crores of ruppes. Give me leave to depart. I shall leave my son here in your service. I shall take every oath that your majesty may ask for, I have come here in firm faith in Your Majesty's promises. Your Majesty is now engaged in war with Bijapur, let me go there, fight and die, and thus serve Your Majesty. "But the Emperor replied : "How can he be given leave to depart for home ?"

On June 7, 1666, the Emperor sent a message to Shivaji, "Hand over all your forts to me. I will restore your *mansab*. Call here your nephew too. I will give *mansab* to him also." Shivaji's reply was : "I do not want any *mansab*. I have no control over the forts." The Emperor was very much displeased over the reply and told Faulad Khan, "Go and dispose of Shivaji."

But Begum Saheba intervened and urged : Mirza Raja is your noted *mansab* and on his assurance (*quol*) Shivaji has come here. He is also your *mansab*. If you will kill him no one will have any faith in your assurance (*quol*)." So due to Begum Saheba's intervention, the Emperor let the matter rest. Jafar Khan, Muhammad Amin Khan and Begum Saheba were most favourable to Shivaji, while Jaswant Singh was instigating the Emperor against Shivaji.

In the meanwhile the Emperor had written about Shivaji to Mirza Raja Jai Singh. *Alamgirnama* refers to the reply of Jai Singh : "I hav given Shivaji solemn assurances. I am still engaged in the campaign in these parts. I shall be greatly obliged if your Majesty overlooks the faults committed by Shivaji. This kindness would be admirable for Imperial affairs and for a proper conducting of the campaign in these parts."⁵

The *Alamgirnama* does not give any details of the escape of Shivaji. It only says that Shivaji fled in disguise.⁶ Ram Singh was blamed for not keeping proper watch on Shivaji. The

Rajasthan letter dated September 3, 1666 mentions that Shivaji may have escaped by crouching in the basket which used to come in and go out.⁷ Although Shivaji's escape was detected on the eighteenth, Shivaji in reality escaped on the seventeenth of August as stated by the Jadhe Chronicle. Rajput guards kept it a secret for twenty-four hours. When they became sure that Shivaji had a good start, only then they raised a hue and cry.

S.M. Pagadi, after examining all aspects of Shivaji's escape, states : "One need not suppose that Shivaji allowed himself to get into the basket. He was not a man to allow himself to be bottled up and rendered helpless. Sambhaji, lad of nine, must have been seated in the basket while Shivaji might have accompanied the bearers disguised as a servant."

Madari was one of the most faithful Muslim servants in Shivaji's service. He has been described frequently as '*Farrash*.' when Shivaji planned to escape from Aurangzeb's prison at Agra, Madari was one of the two whom he had taken into confidence and disclosed to him his future plans.⁸

After leaving Sambhaji in the charge of a Brahmin at Mathura, Shivaji returned to Raigad after passing through, according to historian Bhimsen Saksena, Allahabad, Benaras, Gaya, Jagannath Puri and the territory of Golconda. But According to Jadunath Sarkar, Shivaji's route must have been Mathura, Allahabad, Bundelkhand, Gondwana and Golconda.

Aurangzeb noted in his will that during his last days a moment's carelessness on his part in allowing Shivaji to escape had led to no end of destruction.

Pagadi rightly observes, "With a little foresight Aurangzeb could have won Shivaji to his side. In that event Shivaji's energies might have been utilised in carrying the Mughal arms in Southern India. The current of Indian history might have run in different directions. But it was not to be."

It was unfortunate that the interview between Shivaji and Aurangzeb did not go well. Shivaji was a man of undaunted spirit. The protocol and Court etiquettes and manners were repugnant to him. His sensitive spirit, and sense of dignity overplayed on his emotions. The grandeur of the Mughal Court touched his complex. The result was appalling. A friendly relationship between them would have averted an unnecessary long mutual warfare. It weakened the defence of the country. This helped the British Imperialism to exploit the situation to its best advantage.

Shivaji's Return From Agra

Shivaji had escaped from Agra. His son Sambhaji joined him by the end of 1666. For sometime Shivaji lay quiet, pondering over the policy he should adopt towards the Mughals. With his territory reduced, a loss which Shivaji felt very keenly, he was not in a position to fight the Mughals. The Mughals had experienced discomfiture in their Bijapur campaign, their General Jai Singh had died in disgrace, and Prince Muazzam who succeeded him was weak and indolent. Aurangzeb was involved in the rebellion of the Afghan tribes. He too, therefore, pretended to forget the circumstances which had forced Shivaji to leave Agra. Shivaji's agents Raghunath Korde and Trimbak Sondev, who were arrested, were not allowed to leave Delhi. The *Jedhe Shakavali* under the date 3rd April, 1667, states (Shaka 1589 Chaitra Vadya Panchami) : "Trimbak Pant and Raghunath Pant Korde left Delhi. Friendship was made between Shivaji and the Mughals. In this year Shivaji carried out an assessment of land. The Persian newsletter of 6 May, 1667 states,⁹ the Emperor ordered the Prime Minister to summon the Vakil of Shiva, and reassured him and sent him to his master, on condition of returning in two months, in order to inform Shiva that his offence had been pardoned by His Majesty, that his son had been enrolled as an Imperial Officer (*Mansabdar*), that he was

at liberty to seize as much of Bijapur territory as he could, or else he should remain firm in his own place and obey the Emperor's son (Prince Muazzam). A letter "By order" (*Hasbul hukum*) to this purpose was handed to the *Vakil*.

Shivaji's policy of peaceful relations with the Mughals could be seen from the following :¹⁰ Shivaji has written to Shafikhan : "The Emperor has conferred the *Deshmukhi* rights on me, but the Imperial collectors obstruct me in realising these dues, and most of the ryots living in the neighbourhood of forts surrendered by me (to the Emperor) do not pay the due rent to me. If I am permitted, I can punish them and establish my own revenue administration fully. I have been created a *five Hazari* (both *Zat* and *Sawar* rank) and expect that a *jagir* corresponding to this rank would be granted to me. "The Emperor ordered the following reply to be sent to him" I give subsistence allowance (*jagir tankha*) only to men who render service either in my presence or in a *subah*. You are present neither with me nor with the *subahdar* (of the Deccan). How can you be given *jagir tankha* for your *mansab* ? As for your *Deshmukhi* rights, let not my officers obstruct your collection. I have granted them to you around the ceded forts."

And the following are the letters of Prince Muazzam and Aurangzeb's orders thereon.¹¹

3rd October, 1667 (From Persian *Akhbarat*) Muazzam (the new Viceroy of the Deccan) to this effect : "Shivaji has written a letter to me saying I am devoted to the Imperial Court and my son Sambhaji has been created a commander of five thousand (with 5,000 trooper rank) but has received no *jagir* as *tankha* (or sub-sistence allowance). I now beg that His Majesty would pardon my offences, restores the *mansab* of my son and assign a *jagir* to him. I am ready to render service in person wherever I am ordered."

"As Shivaji is at present manifesting great misery of heart, I beg Your Majesty to forgive him and to restore the

mansab formerly granted (in 1665) to Sambhaji."

His Majesty after reading the despatch handed it back to the Prime Minister and remarked, "Order the restoration of the *mansab* of Sambhaji. Do assign him *jagirs* in the territory of the fort surrendered to me. He should come and render service under the Prince."

Accordingly, Shivaji sent Sambhaji with a contingent of troops to Aurangabad. Sambhaji had an interview with Prince Muazzam on 4th November, 1667. He was created a *mansabdar* of five thousand with *jagirs* in Berar and other places. Sambhaji, with half his troops, remained attached to Prince Muazzam, while the other half of the Maratha contingent were sent to look after the *jagirs* of Sambhaji. After a few days Sambhaji was allowed to return to Rajgad. With a shrunken territory and reduced resources, Shivaji had to be extremely careful in his dealings with Mughals, he certainly needed time. His diplomacy is revealed in the letter which Prince Muazzam wrote to him on 9th March, 1668 : "His gracious Majesty has elevated your head by granting you the title of Raja, which was the extreme point of your desire." With regard to the Maratha contingent, according to *Jedhe Shakavali* 'Wednesday (5th August, 1668) Prataprao and on Shravan Shudha Panchami Sunday (2nd August, 1668) Niraji Rahuji started with their forces for Aurangabad. "There is an endorsed memorandum regarding the presentation of five hundred ruppes as Nisar to the Emperor by Prapatrao, the commander of army, on behalf of Sambhaji, son of Rajah Shivaji, holding the rank of five thousand zat, five thousand Sawar of the date, ninth September, 1668."'¹²

The Maratha contingent sent to Aurangabad under the terms of the *Mansab* could not have contained more than two thousand troops at the most. It might even be less. The historian Bhimsen Saksena who was present at Aurangabad, writes that he had a contingent of one thousand troops. In

actual practice a mansabdar of five thousand did not maintain a contingent of more than a couple of thousand men. Sambhaji's contingent formed a very small part of Shivaji's army.

References :

1. ALAMGIRNAMA (Farman of Aurangzeb to Shivaji) p. 100.
2. Manucci, *STORIA DO MOGOR*, vol. II, p. 136. Also S.M. Pagdi : Chhatrapati Shivaji, p. 153.
3. Bhimsen Saksena : *TARIKH-E-DILKUSHA*
4. S.M. Pagadi, *CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI*, p. 159.
5. ALAMGIRNAMA, p. 970.
6. ARYAYURA WAZA DADE.
7. D.T.S. MANDAL QUARTERLY, 4/637.
8. J. Sarkar : *HOUSE OF SHIVAJI* p. 174.
9. *Ibid*; pp. 174-5.
10. *Ibid*; p. 175.

Chapter Four

Coronation and Conquests

Brisk preparation for the coronation started. On the 19th of May Shivaji visited Pratapgad and paid his obeisance to the goddess Bhavani. He made an offering of golden umbrella weighing three maunds and costing fifty-six thousand rupees to the temple.¹

Shivaji was a Kshatriya. Of that there was no doubt. But for long the rites (Samskaras) attached to the twice born castes had not been performed by the class to which Shivaji belonged. These would be resumed again after the purification ceremony. He had to go through the sacred thread ceremony. The marriage ceremonies with his wives had to be performed again. Having done this he was able to be appointed King, ascend the throne and wear the crown.

The '*Jedhe Chronicle*' briefly described the ceremony as follows :²

"Shaka 1596 Anand Samvatsara, Jyestha Suddha Chaturthi, Ghati five in the first year, (29th May, 1674,) Shivaji was invested with the sacred thread. On Jyestha Shuddha Shashthi, Saturday, (30th May, 1674,) he was married

according to Vedic mantras. Jyeshtha Shuddha Dwadashi, Friday, Chati 21, pal 34, vipal 38/40 SI. 42, when three Ghatis of night remained, Shivaji Raje Bhosale ascended the throne, Moon 10, Rabialaval, 1084 Suhur."

Henry Oxinden writes about the weighing ceremony on the 29th of May :³

"This day, the Raja, according to the Hindu custom was weighed in gold and prized about sixteen thousand Pagodas which money together with one hundred thousand more, is to be distributed after his coronation to the Brahmins who in great number are flocked hither from all the adjacent countries."

As we know from the *Rajyabhishek*, a contemporary work, all the ceremonies were held strictly according to Vedic rites. On Friday, the 29th May, were held the sacred thread ceremony, the *Tuladan* (weighing in ceremony) and the *Tulapurushdan* (a gold image of Vishnu to be given away)/Sarkar's belief that during the sacred thread ceremony, Shivaji was not allowed to recite the Gayatri mantra cannot be shared,⁴ as a sacred thread ceremony without the recitation of the Gayatri mantra is impossible. A very remarkable incident is mentioned in 91-Qualmi Bakhar : "The Maharaja learning (of the refusal of the Brahmins to teach him the Vedic mantras) said : The Brahmins are revered men. It is not proper to appoint them royal servants. They ought not to perform any work except worshipping God." So he removed all the Brahmins from their posts and appointed Prabhu Kaisthas in their places.⁵ The *Tuladan* - weighing-in ceremony - was for the sin committed in not performing the sacred thread ceremony earlier and the *Tula-Purushdan*, a gold image of Vishnu, to be given away was for any sins committed involving the death of Brahmins, women, children and cattle during his career. It is to this ceremony that the Dutch Records refer in the following words :

"On the 14th June Shivaji made a great distribution to the learned men, for the washing away of the sins he had committed, of gold to the weight of his body weighing seventeen thousand pagodas or about one hundred and sixty pounds, and the same weight of silver, copper, spelter, tin and iron and of very fine linen, camphor, salt nails and nutmegs with the same weight of other native spices, butter, sugar etc., of all fruits and all sorts of eatables, betel and arrack (areca) included, also to the weight of his body.

"Two of the learned men proposed sixteen hundred pagodas in addition on account of the sin Shivaji might have committed by his burnings, involving the death of women, children, cattle and Brahmins."⁶

"On the 30th of May, marriage ceremonies with his wives were performed again. From then onwards till the morning of the sixth of June all required Vedic rites in connection with the coronation were gone through. On the morning of the sixth, Shivaji ascended the throne at Raigad and was invested by the assembly with the name of Shivraj."

Sabhasad, who must have been present on the occasion, gives a dramatic and colourful account of the ceremony. Some of his remarks would be read with interest :

"Brahmins well versed in the Vedas came from the home provinces as well as from foreign territories and various holy places A golden throne weighing thirty-two maunds was made and inlaid with the choicest and most precious jewels of the nine kinds (Navratna) that could be procured from the treasury. Waters from the seven great rivers as well as other considerable rivers and of the seas, and of renowned holy places were brought. Jars of gold were made. It was settled that the eight ministers should pour water from the eight jars. Then on propitious day Shivaji mounted the throne. The throne was adorned

with eight pillars decked with jewels. All the ceremonies and rites prescribed by the Shastras and performed on the occasion of the coronation of illustrious monarchs of the Krita, Treta, Dwapar and Kali ages were observed on this occasion. The expenditure on account of this coronation ceremony amounted to one crore and forty-two thousand Huns. The eight ministers (*ashtapradhans*) received a lakh of Huns each, besides one elephant, horse, clothes and ornaments. Thus the Raja ascended the throne. A Maratha King now was the first to become Chhatrapati (the paramount sovereign), (Lord of the Umbrella). This was an event of no ordinary significance."

On June 6, 1674, at a moment pronounced auspicious by the Priest, Shivaji was enthroned at Raigad. For the first time in the history, a Maratha was ruling in the Land of Marathas.

Soon after the coronation according to the Vedic rites, Shivaji held a Durbar. Henry Oxind, the English envoy, who was present on the occasion, writes :⁷

"June the sixth, about seven or eight of the clock, went to Court and found the Raja seated in magnificent throne and all the nobles waiting on him (in) very rich attires, his son Sambhaji Raje, Peshwa More Pandit and a Brahmin of Great eminence seated on an ascent under the throne, the rest as well as officers of the army as others, standing with great respect. I made my obeisance at a distance and Narain Shanvi held up the diamond ring which was to be presented to him. He presently took notice of us and ordered our coming nearer, even to the foot of the throne, where being vested, we were desired to retire, which we did but no sooner than I took notice on each side of the throne there hung (according to the Moors manner) on heads of gilded lances many emblems of government and dominion, as on the right hand were

two great fishes, heads of gold with very large teeth; on the left hand several horses tails, a pair of gold scales on a very rich lance-head poised equally, an emblem of justice and as we returned at the palace gate there were standing two small elephants on each side, and two fair horses with gold bridles and rich furniture, which made us admire which they brought them up the hill, the passage being so difficult and hazardous". Henry writes that "on the eighth of June the Raja was married to a fourth wife without any state or ceremony. This marriage must have been delayed as suggested by Bendre of some unexpected personal reasons."⁸

About the eight Ministers of Shivaji, there is a slight variation in the account of Sabhasad. The correct list would be: (1) Moropant, Peshwa or Pant Pradhan, Chief Minister, (2) Naro Nilkanth, Mazumdar or Pant Amatya, (Revenue Minister), (3) Annaji Datto Sarnis, Pant Sachiv (Finance Minister), (4) Dattaji Pant Wakenawis or Mantri, (Personal Advisor, Home Member), (5) Moreshwar Raghunath Panditrao, (Minister for Religion), (6) Ramachandra Trimbak, Dabir or Sumant (Foreign Minister), (7) Niraji Raoji, Nayayadhish or Chief Justice, (8) Nambirrao Mohite, Sarnobat or Senapati, Commander-in-Chief.

It is notable here that in histories of all the Kings, we find the Kings, crowned first and started career after, and here Shivaji was crowned, only after his successful achievements. Under fore-sighted political reasons and measure, Shivaji had decided to get himself coronated. That is why he did not pay keen attention towards the rituals of coronation. As for example when Nischal Puri from Bengal claimed that the coronation under Vedic system was not enough and the Tantric system was also essential to be performed, Shivaji, in words of Sarkar, like a shrewd practical man that he was, decided to woo both these supernatural hosts. Here lies the

secret of his attraction, by which he could come out successfully of his aims and objects of Hindvi Swaraj.

It is also notable that he was coronated on the demand of the masses and the nation and not on the will of parents or courtiers, as per the traditions prevailing.

The Cost of the Coronation

Sabhasads estimate of the expenses incurred during the coronation of about six crore rupees is very much exaggerated. The Dutch speak of one and half lakh Pagods as the expenditure. Sir Jadunath thinks that about ten lakh Huns or fifty lakh rupees might be a fair estimate.⁹ Making allowances for the ceremonies which continued for many days and also the cost of the throne and other requisites of the coronation, the total cost of the coronation could well be in the neighbourhood of one crore ruppes or twenty lakh Huns. At least some of the cost seems to have been recovered by means of a levy known as Simhasan Patti. This was levied on the Watanholders. There is a reference to the payment of one thousand Huns by the Deshmukh of Dapodi towards the cost of coronation.¹⁰

On the 12th of June articles of peace with the British were signed and ratified by Shivaji and his Ministers of State. They were handed over to Oxinden on the same day. The way was now open for the English to start factories in Shivaji's dominions.

Jijabai passes away

Shivaji's mother Jijabai must have crossed her seventieth year. She had been the greatest source of inspiration to her illustrious son in his life-long struggle. History can afford very few examples of the devotion and affection which mother and son had for each other. Shortly after the coronation of Shivaji, Jijabai passed away peacefully on the night of Wednesday, the 17th of June. The Jedhe Chronicle states :

“Saka 1596 Anand Samvatsar, Jyestha (The Word Chaitra seems to be a mistake of the copyist) Vadya Navmi, Wednesday (17th June, 1674) midnight. Mother Jijabai died at Pachad.”

Since the death of Jijabai took place after midnight, the date would be Thursday morning 18th June. But according to the Hindu calculations of full day at sunrise it would be Wednesday the 17th June.

Shivaji marked his coronation by starting an era known as *Rajyashaka*, and issuing a set of wise regulations in respect of civil, military, revenue and judicial matters. These regulations were known as *Paddhati*. Even the system of correspondence known as *Lakhan Prashasti*, much influenced till now by the sultanate of the Deccan, underwent a modification. A number of Persian terms used in correspondence were switched to Sanskrit and brought into use. Raghunath Pandit was asked to prepare the terms. The work known as the *Rajya Vyavahar Kosh* was executed by Raghunath Pandit with the help of many scholars among whom was Dhundiraj Lakshman Vyas. Many Sanskrit terms such as *Pant Sachiv*, *Pant Amatya*, *Senapati*, *Prant*, *Rajamandal*, *Rajadhyaksha*, *Nyayadhis*, came into common use : During the Peshwa period, however, there was a large scale reversion to the old practice of using terms derived from Persian.

Karnataka Campaign

The unusual calm in the Deccan and the growth of Shivaji's power aroused in Aurangzeb's mind the suspicion that Prince Mu'azzam was conspiring with the Marathas to treat him as he had treated his own father. The prince was accordingly ordered to arrest Shivaji and send him to Court, but private information, that such orders were being prepared, enabled Muazzam to anticipate their arrival by privately warning Shivaji, who accordingly withdrew his representatives from

Aurangabad and the Prince was able to report that he was trying to execute the command. But the issue of these orders again disturbed the peace of the Deccan; Shivaji captured several imperial forts and once more plundered Surat.

Shivaji was crowned and assumed the titles of Maharaja and Chhatrapati - 'Lord of the Umbrella.' This was an act of defiance that Shivaji anticipated that Aurangzeb, who had hitherto affected to regard him with contempt might at length perceive that he was now a danger to the Emperor and put forth his whole strength against him. He, therefore, found a plan for the extension of his powers. With this he prepared to raise from his half brother Vyankoji, the share which he claimed in the fiefs in the Karnataka of their father Shahji. He bribed Bahadur Khan, Viceroy of Deccan and led an army of 70 thousand men through the Kingdom of Bijapur in that of Golconda. There he visited King Abul Hasan at Hyderabad and gained his active sympathy by entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with him against the Empire.

It is recorded that before proceeding to Golconda Shivaji had sought the blessings of Muslim Saints Baba Yaqut of Kelsi, and of Maoni Buwa of Padgaon.

Visit to Golconda

Shivaji was well served by his Envoy to the Court of Golconda, Hanamante, a Brahmin, with a deep interest in Metaphysics and a perfect knowledge of Court proceedings. Hanamante made himself agreeable to the Golconda Prime Minister, like himself a Brahmin, Madanna, and the two secular gentlemen sat together to discuss Sanskrit classics and exploring the interminable phases of Hindu philosophy. It is not long before Madanna was singing the praises of the Maratha King's Envoy to his own King, Abul Hasan. When Hanamante was introduced to the latter, he paid his respect in beautiful Persian which so pleased the King that he invited him again to his palace.

Hanamante was less concerned to extract definite and binding premiums from the King of Golconda than to convince him with the picture of a friendly fascinating and invincible Shivaji. Abul Hasan became impatient to meet Shivaji in person and sent a message saying he proposed to welcome the Maratha Chief at the frontiers of his Kingdom so as to escort him with the honour due to so great a Prince. Shivaji replied with equal courtesy, "I have always regarded you as an elder brother. You must not mind yourself to welcome an inferior person like me. "But the Prime Minister advanced to welcome Shivaji and the great Maratha army emerged towards Hyderabad where the Golconda Court was then in residence.

The discipline of the Maratha Army excited astonishing admiration. Shivaji had issued strict orders to his army in Golconda territory : that all Provisions had to be bought from willing vendors and a formidable list of punishments were promulgated for any damage done to the villages through which the Marathas passed. Only on a few occasions any punishments were found necessary. An army of 70 thousand soldiers, mostly rough hilly tribesmen, the Marathas passed through undefended country, of almost legendary wealth, ruled over by a Muslim King, with discipline and self-denial.

At Hyderabad (then called Bhagyanagar) Shivaji was received with wild enthusiasm. the trees of the city had been thickly sprinkled with scarlet saffron powder and scarlet awnings hung overhead of every house to house, so that one seemed to pass down endless tunnels of yellow and scarlet, From all the windows people leaned out, their hands full of flowers of gold leaf to shower on the Maratha King, and the Hindu women waved red lighted lamps as a sign of blessings. Shivaji responded to the welcome with a tactful abandon by his usual robust simplicity of manner and dress. Before entering the city he donned his royal robes of silk and gold, he distributed among his officers, pearls, gold and swords and jewelled spray for their turbans. As he entered the main gate, the assembled crowd

roared a welcome, Shivaji threw, to right and left of him handful of gold coins and jewels and ordered his treasurer to bring robes of honour to make presents to the important citizens who pressed round his horse.

After the conclusion of his successful state visit to Golconda Shivaji took leave of the King. He left with part of his army towards Shri Shail Mallikarjuna. He was accompanied by Army Commander Meerza Muhammad Amin of Golconda with four thousand infantry, one thousand cavalry and Golconda's main artillery. Shivaji offered worship to Jyotirlingam at Shri Shail Mallikarjuna. On 17th April, 1677 he crossed the rugged valley of river Krishna and arrived at Atmokoore. From there he proceeded to Tirupathi and offered prayers to the presiding Deity. On 19th June Shivaji attacked the commercial Koth of East India Company at Timmeri some seven miles from Madras and ransacked it.

He rejoined his main army at Anantapur and the Maratha forces swept over Karnatak without meeting any resistance. The Central Government at Bijapur had not ventured to oppose Shivaji's march and now offered no open opposition to his seizure of the forts and towns of the East coast. A few garrisons and commanders, more resolute than the government they served, resisted the Marathas, but seldom for long. The huge fortress of Gingi, to be later revealed in Maratha hands as impregnable against Mughal assault, was taken at a rush. The Jesuit Fathers at Madura paused in their congenial task of reconciling Vedantic pantheism with christian philosophy and wrote excitedly, "Shivaji fell upon the place like a thunderbolt and carried it at the first assault." Not content with he "constructed new ramparts, raised towers and bastions and carried out all these works with a perfection of which European skill would not have been ashamed."

Shivaji and Vyankoji

Leaving a force to invest Vellore, which was defended not only by a resolute garrison of Afghans but also by number of savage crocodiles which swarmed in the moat surrounding the city, Shivaji pressed on South. In June he came up with the Bijapur Governor of the district, who was prudently retreating before the Marathas, and in a headlong charge through a thick wood drove him in flight with only a hundred men, leaving behind the rest of his army as prisoners and together his horses with cavalry and artillery. When within ten miles of Tanjaur, Shivaji's half-brother obviously appalled at this terrifying swift approach, timidly opened negotiations. Shivaji invited him to his camp, but distrusting his good faith, demanded that five members of his entourage should be given to Shivaji as hostages. Shortly before, he had written to the English merchants in Madras desiring to purchase some "cordial stores and other sorts of counter Poisons."

Vyankoji was petulant and defiant. After a week of tearful wrangling he escaped by night from his brother's camp and addressed wild appeals for help to most of the Princes of India, including the Great Mughal. Shivaji would have been justified had he exacted satisfaction from this gesture of renewed hostilities from Vyankoji's hostages, but he only shrugged his shoulders and said, "Why did he run off like that? He is young and has acted like a child." Then, turning towards the trembling hostages he dismissed them with presents and robes of honour.

Throughout the following year Vyankoji flitted up and down the Karnataka coast. When Vyankoji finally submitted, Shivaji gave him the town of Tanjaur and certain adjacent lands to keep him employed but imposed upon him as his Minister that shrewd Brahmin - Hanamante. In actual fact this nominee of Shivaji became the real Ruler of Tanjaur; for Vyankoji, depressed by his defeat, abandoned the habits of his rank and

adopted the life of a religious mendicant.

By 1678 not only the Karnatka but also the central parts of Mysore had been conquered. Leaving a large army of occupation to garrison his new dominions Shivaji returned to his capital to Western India with an enormous train of booty. As Mr. H. Gary wrote from Bombay on January 16 of that year, "With a success as happy as Caesar's in Spain, he came, saw and overcome and reported so vast a treasure in gold, diamonds, emeralds, rubies and wrought corals that have strengthened his arms with very able sinews to prosecute his further victorious designs." (*Shivaji and his Times* by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, p. 303)"

It is easy, so apparently effortless was Shivaji's triumph, to underestimate the difficulties which the expedition presented and the skill with which Shivaji overcome them. The actual campaign had to be conducted in unfamiliar terrain over seven hundred miles from his base. Immediate and spectacular success was essential; for a few temporary reverses would have tempted the Mughal generals to launch an offensive along the Northern frontiers of the Maratha country and would have stirred Bijapur to a last desperate effort; which would have eluded the bright confidence of the King of Golconda in the invincibility of his new friend.

The last year of Shivaji's life was marked by his appearance in a new role, that of defender of Bijapur.

That unhappy city was disturbed by constant faction-fights. The Sultan was a minor and the Queen-Mother, unlike the determined lady who had sent Afzal Khan against Shivaji, was accused even by her son of frivolous and unbecoming conduct. A quarrel over an alleged promise to give a Bijapur Princess to one of Aurangzeb's sons developed into a dreary war between Bijapur and the Empire. Diler Khan advanced on Bijapur and invaded the city, completing the ruin and disintegration of all Bijapur territory outside the walls of the

city. Insistence of imperial dignity and prestige was completing the Balkanisation of Muslim power and rendering inevitable Maratha domination.

An interesting feature of this siege was the number of experiments in plastic surgery made by the Mughul Surgeons. The citizens of Bijapur cut off the noses of all the Mughals they caught. The army doctors with the Imperial forces restored the missing noses with skin from the wounded men's forehead. Manucci notes, "I saw many persons with such nose and they were not so disfigured as they would have been without any noses at all, but they bore between their eyebrows the marks of incision."

The struggle was conducted with great bitterness. The Bijapuris increasingly desperate at last, the Regent of Bijapur appealed to Shivaji. There is pathos in the Phrasing of the Regent's cry for aid to the 'Inhuman butcherly fellow' of a few years ago : "You know the condition of this Kingdom," the Regent wrote, "We have no army, no money, no ally to help us, our enemies are numerous and avid for war we cannot defend ourselves, unless you help us. Turn towards us. Tell us what we should do and we will do it."

Shivaji first required recognition of all his conquests in Southern India and of all the districts he had detached by force from Bijapur. When this was agreed to, Shivaji sent two of his captains who first cut to pieces a Mughal force marching to reinforce Diler Khan, and then broke up Diler Khan's siege-train and drove his army away from the walls of Bijapur back to Mughal territory. Diler Khan had, as a subordinate, seen Shivaji's humiliation by Jai Singh. Now, as generalsimo, he was easily defeated by a subordinate of Shivaji. The change in the Maratha attitude to the once-dreaded Mughals could hardly be better exemplified than by the remark of Shivaji's captain who, when given command against Diler Khan, said gaily, "I shall go and punish Diler Khan as he deserves."

Bijapur considered Shivaji only as their deliverer in the recent siege, and when Shivaji visited Bijapur to ride in triumph through the streets, where as a boy he had wandered, a distrustful lonely rustic, he was welcomed with wild enthusiasm, and adored as almost divine by Muslim citizens.

In the Shrine of the Relic, bowing before the casket of the 'Two Hairs of the Prophet,' the priests who had formerly exhausted their armoury of curses now offered prayers for Shivaji's safety and prosperity. The rich merchants in their "Turbans of Gold Damaksed" and their "Gold Atlas Coats to their heels." Who had once cursed Shivaji as a bandit interfering with the caravan routes, now bent over their carved blackwood balconies and cheered Shivaji as the hero who had saved them from the Mughal sack. And as Shivaji rode into the Palace courtyard the courtiers, in the balconies of the Nater Pavillion rose at his approach and the Sultan came out most respectfully to welcome his guest to a great banquet in his honour. Shivaji must have thought of the day forty-two years before when his father introduced him into that Palace and a Sultan waited impatiently for an uncouth village lad to prostrate himself before the throne. The Maratha who had then refused obeisance now sat in pomp, waited on timidly by a Sultan.

Banquet followed banquet. There were reviews and processions and feasts.

But people noticed that even at the height of victory celebrations Shivaji's face remained sad and thoughtful. He made his excuses and slipped away from Bijapur as soon as he could. While most men would have been pardonably exalted at this strange reversal of fate - the neglected child, the rebel, the life-long enemy welcomed now at last with adulation, all this made Shivaji more than ever conscious of the impermanences of everything, the change, the ending.

About Karnatak campaign the Cambridge History of India records : "The Carnatic campaign was the greatest

military exploit of Shivaji's life, and marked him as the greatest soldier of his age in India. The Carnatic was part of the kingdom of Bijapur, of which his brother, Vyankoji was a Vassal, and he overcame both the troops of Bijapur and those of Vyankoji. As a modern historian of the Marathas says, that in the course of 18 months at a distance of 700 miles from his base he had conquered a territory as large as his former kingdom. While a single reverse would have been fatal, he has not suffered even a single check. Victory had succeeded victory, town fallen after town. As he went he organised his conquest, and, when he returned to Raigarh his new possessions were securely bound together from sea to sea by a line of forty eight strongholds held by garrisons to his cause." The Cambridge History further records. "Shivaji had then reached the zenith of his power. He had gathered the bulk of the Marathi speaking people, by his new alliance with Bijapur and Golconda, and his chain of fortresses which he had built from Bednore to Tanjaur. He had secured its conquest."

Aurangzeb had always, affected to despise his great opponent but was at length compelled to recognise that he was a great captain and added, "my armies have been employed against him for nineteen years, nevertheless his state has always been increasing."

Shivaji's Naval Force

The reference in the coronation proclamation of Shivaji to the control over the Oceans must have caused Mr. Henry Oxinden, the Emissary of the East India Company who attended the coronation, considerable distress. No one of the other Rulers in India had so far shown any interest in the sea. At the same time Shivaji's claim was not altogether a flight of fancy. In the 14 years that he had taken to carve out his kingdom he had also built up a formidable fleet. Indeed, it is recorded that the sea was his first love dating from the time he spent as a

youth in Mahad near Bombay.

The Portuguese, in Goa, had already taken a note of the growing power of Shivaji's fleet and signed a treaty of friendship with him. The Goan Viceroy had sent his Emissary to Shivaji with gifts and had undertaken to supply him with cannons at fair price in return for a promise that he would not molest their ships.

At the time of his Coronation, Shivaji had 57 major ships of war (excluding smaller crafts) with a total fighting strength of over 5,000 men. Five years later there were 66 major ships. Even his expedition to Karwar and Ankola with 85 asserted *gallivats*, (large row-boats) each ranging from 30 to 150 tonnes, and three-masted *ghurabs* (gun-boats) total fighting strength of 4,000 men, a formidable force even by to-day's standards.

Karwar Expedition

The Karwar expedition is notable for two reasons : it did not fight any battles, and it was the only Naval expedition of any size that was personally commanded by Shivaji. It is said that Shivaji's ship was blown off-course by an unseasonable gale which he took to be a warning from the gods. The main object of the Karwar expedition was almost certainly not territorial gain or plunder, and it cautiously avoided the Portuguese coast. Shivaji's fleet was barely of five years' building, raised from scratch. The Karwar expedition was its trial run; the ships and their commanders and men were being put through their paces much as they do with newly fitted pot ships to this day.

Once again in 1679, the fleet went out to 'Show the Flag' and caused the English at Bombay many anxious moments. They were convinced that Shivaji was mounting a combined operation against Surat. The fleet sailed past Bombay, its every move watched by the English with bated breath, but turned back without firing a shot. It was only then they realised that

this was a full-dressed rehearsal of the coast. Shivaji's military genius was far ahead of the tactics understood in those days.

Shivaji was unquestionably the first ruler in India to have realised the need of protecting the coast. His ships gradually began to patrol the coast in increasing numbers "beside the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Siddis, and the English and (in all) 207 hostile powers; living on the tributes offered by the people along the coast and collecting for the Kings rations, gold and every tribute. In this manner it soon came to be regarded as a formidable fighting force and veritable army upon the high seas."

Side by side with the development of the fleet, Shivaji carried out a systematic campaign to capture the forts along the coast and to build up fortifications at all strategic points. He collected around him hand-picked men who might in today's phraseology be described as technicians, engineers, shipwrights, workers in brass and lead and gun-smiths. Muslim technicians were employed freely by Shivaji. There were also in his service the Portuguese, French and Dutch engineers.

Seaside Forts

In all Shivaji built 13 new seaside forts along the Konkan coast and fortified and improved many others. Perhaps the best preserved is Sindhu Durg, built on an island of Malwan, earmarked but never destined to become the headquarters of the Maratha naval force. 302 flags used to fly there over as many bastions; today it stands a salient sentry indented armour, forgotten at his post. You can go all round Sindhu Durg and still miss the entrance gate, for it is concealed in many folds of the wall which are miraculously preserved, as though the daily prayers chanted by the dissidents of the priest originally appointed by Shivaji to ensure that the sea should not encroach upon its walls, nor should an enemy prevail," still retain these efficiency. A footprint of Shivaji implausibly large

is still worshipped in Sindhu Durg, the fort of the ocean. In 1679, Shivaji took over island of Khanderi close to Bombay and had it fortified in the teeth of strongest opposition by the East India Company. The Company sought the help of the Marathas from Khanderi, but the Siddi double-crossed his allies and himself went and occupied the adjoining island of Underi, which is said to have caused the English even more distress than the occupation of Khanderi by Shivaji. For more than 100 years Khanderi remained with the Marathas.

The seaside fort that Shivaji built was on a rocky outcrop of Alibag, 20 miles south of Bombay consisting of six small islands, for many years continued a minor outpost of the Maratha forces. Later it was to be converted into an impregnable self-contained fortress with numerous "sweet water" tanks and with its own ship-building yards capable of holding out for long periods without outside help. Nothing more than a vast bone rock (Kul) surrounded by water (Aab). The new fortress came to be called Kul-Aab a name which even before the fort was completed was transferred by the people into the simpler 'Kulaba' or 'Kolaba.' In years to come, the fortress of Kolaba became the home and headquarters of successive generations of the hereditary Naval Chiefs of the Maratha Kings, the Angreys. In later years, the family came to be known as the "Angreys of Kolaba."

Long before the beginning of the 18th century the Portuguese ceased to represent a threat on land. only five pockets remained, Gocha, Chaul, Bassein, Thana and Bombay. The Portuguese Viceroy lived in Goa.

But on the sea they were just powerful as ever. Their ships were faster, heavier, stronger, and above all better armed than the ships of the Indian rulers. They compelled all Indian ships to acknowledge their authority over the sea. No ship was permitted to use the waters of the Konkan unless it carried Cartaz from the Portuguese Viceroy. "These ships belong unto

the King of Portugal and none are to come here without his licence," the first British were told. The Portuguese were unchallenged on sea until the arrival on the scene of Kanoji Angre. The only ships which could flout the authority of the Portuguese were the ships of the East India Company. A remarkable letter is found throwing light on the straightforward outlook of Shivaji who acted without any religious consideration. Shivaji freely employed Muslim naval officers. The letter says :

"*Dandavat* of Shivaji Raje to Jivaji Vinayak, Subhedar and Karkun, Subha and Mamalat Parbhavali. Suhuh, year 1075. Moropant Peshwa sent you orders directing you to supply corn and cash to our naval commanders Daulat Khan and Darya Sarang. But we learn with regret and surprise that there were persons incompetent like you. You probably thought that if you did not supply corn and provisions which you were asked to send, they could obtain them from somewhere else. You are aware that I have built and garrisoned Padmadurga, making it a second Rajapuri to match and to conquer the old Rajapuri. Help is badly needed for Padmadurga; water, fuel and other provisions must be supplied at once and for that purpose ships should have reached there quickly. Now the armies of the Siddi must be attacking Padmadurga from all sides and trying to overpower it; and you have failed to supply the required provisions in time. This will cirpple my navy at a most critical moment. The result of your conduct will be as bad as treachery. What is the use of sending provisions to Daulat Khan and Darya Sarang when they do not reach at the required moment? Will that in any way make up the loss? Can it be that the Siddi had offered you bribes and made you his servant? That must be the reason why you are acting in this way. Such treacherous servants must be most severely dealt with. Do you think I will connive at the crimes of a traitor simply

because you are a Brahmin ? The Muslim Commanders have proved most honest and faithful even though they were asked to fight against a Muslim Ruler."

The Sack of Jalna

On the 4th of November, 1679, Shivaji swiftly marched into Deccan where the Mughal force was engaged in the siege of Bijapur. The Mughal Generals were unable to check his advance. Shivaji's invasion carried devastation far and wide. In the middle of November, he fell upon the prosperous and flourishing town of Jalna, 40 miles to the East of Aurangabad, and plundered it thoroughly.

The Jedha Shekawali states : "Saka 1601 Siddherthi, month of Kartik (25th October to 23rd November, 1679) Shivaji went and plundered Jalnapur. There he fought with Rammasta Khan. Siddhoji Nimbalkar was killed by a gun-shot. Shivaji returned to Raigarh by way of Pattagarh."

Some Persian records also refer the sack of Jalnapur (Jalhanapur) which had been a very prosperous place, a business centre since the period of Akbar. Shivaji entered Jalna, stayed at Mastgarh a place on the bank of Kundlik river, and felt severe pains in his stomach. He was rushed to the Khankah of a Muslim Saint - Hazrat Jan Mohammed Shah, resident in a hut near the river. With the blessing of the Saint, he felt cured. Shivaji talked with him in the hut now called 'Ghanta Ghar'. Shivaji presented to the Saint a Palanquin (Palki) and 4 Naqaras.⁹ Hazrat Jannullah Shah (Jan Mohammad)¹⁷ died in 1693 A.D.

References :

1. V.S. Bendre, SHRI SHIVARAJYABHISHEK (THE Discovery of the Sanskrit Manuscript RAJYABHISHEK PADHATI in the Bikaner Library has thrown considerable light on the coronation ceremonies of Shivaji).

2. S.Pagadi : CHATRAPATI SHIVAJI, p. 238.
3. Ibid.
4. J. Sarkar : SHIVAJI, p.206. (According to Sarkar the sacred thread ceremony took place on 28th, marriage on 29th and the weighing-in ceremony on 30th. The correct sequence is sacred thread ceremony and weighing-in on 29th and marriage on 30th).
5. J. Sarkar : SHIVAJI. p.206.
6. Qalmi Bakhar ed. by V.S. Wakaskar (Baroda 1930).
7. Also known as VISHRAMGARH, 20 miles South of Nasik.
8. HALAT HAZRAT JANULLAH SHAH by Habibur Rehman Shervani
9. Ghulam Samdani Khan Gohar : KHIYABAN MARATHA who describes this incident.

Chapter Five

The Last Days

Jijabai, mother of Shivaji, gave birth to six children but only two of them survived. The elder son Sambhaji accompanied his father Shahji to the South. He died sometime before 1657 AD leaving a son Umaji behind him. Shivaji was the younger brother of Sambhaji. Vyankoji was the stepbrother of Shivaji, son from stepmother Tukabai. Vyankoji succeeded in founding a Maratha Stae at Tanjaur.

Shivaji's Wives

Shivaji married many times in keeping with the practice prevailing in his time. Shivaji's first wife was Saibai. She was from the Nimbalkar family of Phalton. She gave birth to three daughters and a son, the famous Sambhaji, who was born on 14th May, 1657. Saibai died in September, 1659. Shivaji's second wife was Sagunabai a near relation of Netaji Palkar. She gave birth to a daughter. Shivaji's third wife was Sakarbai. Shivaji's fourth wife was Kashibai the daughter of Jadhavrao. She had no issues. Shivaji's fifth wife Putlibai came from Ingle family. Putlibai performed the rite of Sati two months after the death of Shivaji. Soyrabai, the sixth wife of Shivaji, came from

the family of Thobitas. She gave birth to a daughter and one son Raja Ram. Shivaji's seventh wife was Laxmibai and his eighth wife was Gunwantbai, nothing is known about them.

Shivaji had two sons Sambhaji and Raja Ram and six daughters. Few of his daughters survived Shivaji. Most of these marriages were performed aiming at alliances with important Marathas.¹

Shivaji's last days were darkened by domestic troubles. His son Sambhaji had proved most unfit to succeed him. His wife Soyrabai harassed him to designate her son Raja Ram as heir and his brother Vyankoji, neglecting the public business under his great charge in the Karnatak was posing as a religious hermit. Shivaji sent him an affectionate but reproachful letter, the last which he himself wrote after returning to his capital.² His Ministers noticed a new gravity in his tone, a gentleness and resignation. To every one he asked to be forgiven for any mistake he might be guilty of, for any failing or fault. Then he spoke gravely of his country's future after his death. Then he referred to his foolish son Sambhaji and the bitter Soyrabai. He was worried by the intrigues of his Queen, for the benefit of her son. Shivaji refused to alter the accession inspite of Sambhaji's defects. Shivaji was no longer interested in the apartments of his womenfolk. Queen Soyrabai complained bitterly : "I have dealt faithfully with him from my childhood. But now he had no affection for me that is why he has left me alone."³

But nothing could wean Shivaji from his increasing melancholy. He wrote to Guru Ramdas "If I had been good the God would summon me to His feet. I can no longer bear my separation from my mother."

Shortly after the marriage of his son Raja Ram, Shivaji fell ill. The foreboding of his approaching end increased. About the nature of Shivaji's illness, Sabhasad, his biographer, states only 'that after a few days the King fell ill with fever.'⁴

When Shivaji returned from Panhalgad, he could not

have had the feeling that his life was rapidly drawing to a close. Nor could any one have felt that his illness could take a serious turn. The Peshwa Moropant was away campaigning in Baglana. Annaji Datto, the Revenue Minister was in South Konkan. The Commander-in-Chief Namirrao Mohite was in the Satara region watching the movement of Bijapur forces.

Death takes him away

As Shivaji saw his end drawing near, he called his officers near him. Sabhasad, who might have been present on the occasion, names Nilopant, the Peshwa's son Prahlad Niraji, Gangadhar Janardan, Ramchandra Nilkanth, Raoji Somnath, Abaji Ghadge, Baji Kadam, Mudhoji Sarkhwas, Suryaji Malsure and Mohadji Naik Pansambal, as having been present at the time.

In his narration, Sabhasad has shown that Shivaji spoke of the coming events and predicted Sambhaji's erratic behaviour, the invasion of the Mughals, the near destruction of the Maratha State and its revival by Rajaram. He also predicted the future exploits of Nilkanth Moreshwar Peshwa, Ramchandrakant Amatya, Prahlad Niraji, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhirji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav. Sabhasad has written this in 1694 AD when the above persons were fighting the Mughals. Sabhasad writes on the last utterances of Shivaji :

“At these words from the King every one felt extremely grieved. Tears began to roll down from their eyes. The King then said, “Do not grieve. This is a world where death is inevitable. All who were born in this world had to depart. You should now compose your mind and be of pure thought. You may now withdraw. I will now meditate on the Divinity.”⁵

Having sent the people out, the King had his bath with Ganges water. He applied the sacred ash to his body and put on the string of Rudraksha, and through Yoga breathed his

last. It was the afternoon of Shaka 1602. Raudra Sanwatsar, Chaitra Shuddha Purnima (3rd April, 1680), Sunday, when the King departed to the heavens.

The King's body was cremated. Sandal and bilva wood was used. The Queens and other ladies, the ministers and attendants advised that the final obsequies be performed by Rajaram. Rajaram was overcome with grief. Everyone was grieved. As the eldest son Sambhaji was not present at the time, Rajaram performed the funeral ceremonies.⁶

One of the Queens of Shivajis Putlibai later performed the rite of Sati on 27th June, 1680. By that time Sambhaji had put down all intrigues against Shivaji and had arrived at Raigarh on the 18th of June, 1680. He ascended the throne on 20th of July, 1680. The formal coronation, however, took place on 16th January, 1681.

Thus passed away Shivaji. This extraordinary man had, in the course of three decades, carved out an independent State, challenged the mighty Mughal empire, and left a name which was to prove a never-failing inspiration to future generations.

They took his sword and placed it in the temple of the Mother-goddess at Satara. Drawn from its sheath, the sword seems enormous and most unwieldy. The archaic simplicity of its design was a strange contrast to the tawdry decorations of the temple where it was housed, the artificial flowers and cut-glass chandeliers. "It has been to the Maratha bards what the Joyeuse and Durand and Charlemagne and Roland and the Askalon of patron Saint were to the wandering travadours of Europe."⁷

When the news reached Delhi, Aurangzeb was stirred to a speech of unusual chivalry :

"He was a great Captain and the only one who had the magnanimity to raise a new kingdom. My armies have been employed against him for nineteen years, and, nevertheless, his state has been always increasing."⁸

Reporting the death of Shivaji on 29th April, 1680, the English writer from Bombay to Surat : ⁹ "We have certain news that Shivaji Raja is dead. It is now twenty-three days since he deceased, it is said of a bloody flux being sick twelve days."

In a contemporary Portuguese record, the death of Shivaji has been attributed to an abscess (Anthrax).¹⁰

The Masire Alamgiri states that according to reports, Shivaji vomited blood and died.¹¹

There is thus no doubt that Shivaji died of fever and blood dysentery.¹²

Paying glowing tributes to Shivaji, the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, writes :

"Shivaji did not belong to Maharashtra alone; he belonged to the whole Indian nation. Shivaji was not an ambitious ruler anxious to establish a kingdom for himself but a patriot inspired by a vision and political ideas derived from the teachings of the ancient philosophers. He studied the merits and faults of the systems of administration in kingdom existing at the time and determined his own policies and administration in the light of that knowledge. A devout Hindu, he was tolerant of other religions and established a number of endowments for maintaining sacred places belonging to them. As a General he was undoubtedly one of the greatest in Indian history; he saw the need for and raised a navy to guard his coastline and to fight against the British and the Dutch. Pratapgad fort built in 1656 stands to-day as a monument to his military genius. Shivaji is a symbol of many virtues, more especially of love of country."

Much later, on the three hundredth death anniversary of Shivaji, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, eulogised his services to the contemporary India, from which we can derive lesson for modern India :

"The light of that torch has provided strength to the country even after the passage of hundreds of years and it has given us the inspiration to wage our war of independence. He was a great man not only for Maharashtra or for India : I think he ranks among the greatest men of the world. Since we were a slave country, our great men (whatever their standing) have been somewhat played down in world history. Had the same person been born in a European country, he would have been praised to the skies and known everywhere. It would have been said that he had illumined the world. From all points of view, therefore we should try to imbibe Chhatrapati Shivaji's tolerance, and his approach to the country's unity and freedom and patriotism. I think that the truest homage to him would be to regard ourselves as soldiers in his army. We have no swords in our hands but let us unite in the same battle against the same oppression and the same evils and to strengthen the freedom of that very country, to make the image of Mother India more noble, whatever be the sacrifice or suffering.

"The challenge before us today is not the challenge of aggression. But when battles had to be fought you know that the people of Maharashtra did so. They laid down their lives or were wounded. But there is another kind of challenge today, the challenge of ideology. What is good for another country is sought to be imposed on us also. People of other lands do not relish it much when we declare No, this is India, we shall follow our own ideology, our own policy. For this we have to stand firm; and I think Shivaji, if he were amongst us today, would have felt the same way."

References :

1. V.S. Bandre; CHAHRAPATI SHIVAJI, MAHARAJ, pp. 125-128.
2. SHIVA DIGVIJAY, translated by S.N. Sen.
3. Ibid.

4. SABHASAD CHRONICLE (Wakaskar Edition), p.112.
5. Ibid.
6. SABHASAD is wrong. It was not Sunday but Saturday. The Jedhe shakavali is specific that Shivaji died on Chaitra Shudha Prunima, Saturday, in the afternoon (3rd April, 1680).
7. Sullivan quoted in PARASNIS, Mahabaleshwar.
8. Orme.
9. English records on Shivaji, Vol. II p. 311.
10. See Pissurlencers Portuguese Maratha Sambandha, footnote to page 84, "Shivaji Morreo de hum entraz" The word flux occurring in the English letter could mean blood dysentery.
11. Masire Alamgiri (Sarkar's English translation) p.120.
12. The Dutch in their letter dated October 23, 1680 refer to a report from Golconda that Shivaji might have been poisoned by his second wife (Shivakalin Patra Sar Sangraha, 698, Vol. II letter 2286). There is no reference to such rumours in English, Portuguese or even Persian sources. The Marathi source Sabhasad's Bakhar does not mention it and it is the only contemporary source. The 91-Qalimi Bakhar belongs to the late 18th century. In one of its Persian rendering, 'Tarikhe Shivaji,' there is a reference to Soyrabai having brought about the death of Shivaji. But these sources are later and utterly untrustworthy. Chitnis in his Bakhar of 1910 mentions that Sambhaji in a fit of anger charged Soyrabai with having poisoned Shivaji and ordered her to be interned alive. Chitnis places this event in June, 1680. His account has been proved to be wrong. Soyrabai did not die till a year later. The Marathi Bakhar Shivadigvijaya was compiled in the first half of the 19th century and as such is untrustworthy. In view of the contemporary Persian, Portuguese, English and Marathi records, the story of Shivaji having been poisoned by his wife has to be rejected.

Chapter Six

Aurangzeb's Prolonged Deccan War

The warm reception accorded to the rebel prince Akbar (Aurangzeb's son) at the Court of the Maratha Raja Sambhaji, obliged Aurangzeb to return to the Deccan, which he had twice ruled as Viceroy in his father's reign, but had not visited since his accession to the throne. We may, therefore, revert to the history of the Deccan, in order to explain the situation which the Emperor found himself called upon to face. He had patched up with Ali II of Bijapur, from whom he extorted a heavy indemnity which materially aided him in his prolonged Deccan campaign.

After Shah Jahan's treaty with the kingdoms of the Deccan on the extinction of the kingdom of Ahmednagar, in 1633, Shahji had been permitted to enter the service of Bijapur. He held important fiefs in the neighbourhood of Pune. He afterwards acquired extensive fiefs in the districts of Karnataka conquered by Bijapur. In Bijapur and in Karnataka fiefs he usually resided with his elder and favourite son, Sambhaji, leaving his Northern estates near Pune under the management of his agent, to whom was also entrusted the

education of his younger son, Shivaji. On the death of his father's agent, Shivaji assumed the management of these estates as though they were his own, remitting revenue neither to his father nor to the State. He captured a number of hill forts and annexed the districts which they dominated, and the State, too weak to attack him, suspected that he was acting under secret instructions from his father, who was seized and imprisoned. Shahji appealed to the Emperor Shahjahan, and Ali II fearing lest Shivaji should transfer his estates and his services to the Emperor, released Shahji and permitted him to return to the Government of Karnatak.

Shivaji, one of the greatest soldiers of his times, was a statesman no less than a soldier. His ambition was to establish in India great Maratha power, and for the attainment of this object he was most favourably situated. The kingdom of Bijapur was entering upon the last stages of decay. When Aurangzeb, as Viceroy, had invaded the kingdom, Shivaji had stood aloof. After Aurangzeb had left the Deccan for Agra, Ali II attempted to punish the rebel, but Shivaji slew, at the private interview, the Commander of the forces sent against him, and dispersed his troops. Having eluded another force he encroached on the imperial province of the Deccan, and raided it almost to the gates of Aurangabad, the Imperial capital in the Deccan. Aurangzeb then appointed his maternal uncle, Shaista Khan, to the Viceroyalty, and in 1660 he entered into a treaty with Ali II for a combined attack on Shivaji. Of the Maratha's estates some were devastated and of his forts many were captured, but he retained the Southern Konkan. In June, 1661, Shivaji descended from his fortress in disguise, entered Pune with a few followers, broke at night into the house occupied by the Viceroy, slew his son and his guard, and wounded Shaista Khan himself, who narrowly escaped with his life. Shaista Khan was then recalled, and Aurangzeb sent as Viceroy to the Deccan his second son, Mu'azzam an unwarlike prince, with whom Shivaji was able to conclude an armistice on very

favourable terms. On his father's death in 1664, Shivaji assumed the title of Raja, struck coin in his own name, and shortly afterwards sacked the imperial city of Surat. Aurangzeb could not ignore these acts of defiance and aggression, and sent against the rebel his ablest generals, Jai Singh of Ambar and Diler Khan.

The campaign against Shivaji was pursued with great vigour, and Shivaji was reduced to such strains that he sued for peace. Jai Singh received him with great courtesy, and at Pandharpur concluded with him a convention under which Shivaji agreed to attend the Imperial Court under a safe-conduct granted by the Raja. He left the Deccan in March, 1666 and in May, on Aurangzeb's fiftieth birthday, was presented at Court with ten of his officers by Jai Singh's son, Ram Singh. There he was informed that he, his young son Sambhaji, and his master of the horse, Netaji, were appointed Commanders of 5,000 horses. Shivaji regarded the association of his young son and his servant with him in the rank conferred on him, and the place assigned to him at Court, as deliberate insults, and was very much enraged. He protested to Aurangzeb against the treatment which he had received, and was consequently placed under detention. Ram Singh was ordered to accommodate him in the Amber house at Agra, and was made responsible for his custody. The Rajput prince regarded these orders as a breach of the safe-conduct which his father had granted and Shivaji was not subjected to many galling restraint. His escort was permitted to return to the Deccan, and shortly afterwards he and his son escaped. Shivaji made his way to Mathura, disguised as a pilgrim, and thence journeyed to the Deccan by devious routes, reaching his fortress capital, Raigarh, after an absence of nine months. He was joyously welcomed by his servants and his subjects, and lost no time in settling his account with the Emperor. He recovered the Konkan and most of the other possession which he had ceded under the convention of Pandharpur. Jai Singh was besieging

Bijapur, but with little prospect of success, and, perceiving that his line of retreat was threatened by Shivaji, retired to Aurangabad, but was recalled from the Deccan. On his way to Court he died at Burhanpur, worn out by age and long service. Mu'azzam was again sent to the Deccan, and was again cajoled by Shivaji not only into making peace, but even into obtaining Aurangzeb's sanction to Shivaji's retention of the forts and lands which he had recovered, and to the revival in his favour of the title of Raja, which had been conferred by the Ahmednagar kingdom on his grandfather, Maloji.

The unusual calm in the Deccan and the growth of Shivaji's power aroused in Aurangzeb's mind the suspicion that Mu'azzam was conspiring with the Maratha to treat him as he had treated his father. The Prince was accordingly ordered to arrest Shivaji and send him to Court, but private information that such orders were being prepared enabled Mu'azzam to anticipate their arrival by privately warning Shivaji, who accordingly withdrew his representatives from Aurangabad, and the prince was able to report that it was impossible to execute the command. But the issue of these orders again disturbed the peace of the Deccan. Shivaji captured several imperial forts, once more plundered Surat, and invading the kingdom of Golconda, extorted from its Ruler a large sum of money as ransom.

On June 6, 1674, Shivaji was crowned, and assumed the titles of Maharaja and Chhatrapati, or 'Lord of the Umbrella.' This was an act of defiance, and Shivaji anticipated that Aurangzeb, who had hitherto affected to regard him with contempt, might at length perceive that he was a danger to the empire, and put forth his whole strength against him. He, therefore, formed a plan for the extension of his powers. With this object he prepared to wrest from his half-brother Vyankoji the share which he claimed in the rich fiefs in the Karnatak of their father, Shahji. He bribed Bahadur Khan, Viceroy of the Deccan, and led an army of 70,000 men through the kingdom

of Bijapur to that of Golconda. There he visited the King, Abul Hasan, at Hyderabad, and gained his active sympathy by entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with him against the Empire.

The Karnatak campaign was the most important military exploit of Shivaji's life, and marks him as the greatest soldier of his age in India. The Karnatak was part of the kingdom of Bijapur, of which his brother, Vyankoji, was a vassal, and he overcame both the troops of Bijapur and those of Vyankoji. As a modern historian of the Marathas says, "In the course of eighteen months at a distance of 700 miles from his base, he had conquered a territory as large as his former kingdom. While a single reverse would have been fatal, he had not suffered even a single check. Victory had succeeded victory; town had fallen after town. As he went, he organised his conquests, and, when he returned to Raigarh, his new possessions were securely bound together from sea to sea by a line of fortified strongholds held by garrisons brave to the death and devoted to his cause." He allowed his brother to retain, as his vassal, Tanjaur and some territory in its neighbourhood.

Bahadur Khan's treachery was discovered and he was recalled from the Deccan. His successor, Diler Khan, had, in alliance with Bijapur, attacked the kingdom of Golconda, Shivaji's ally; but the Bijapur troops had not been paid and so melted away, and Diler Khan was unable, without their help, to cope with the army of Golconda. Mu'azzam was sent again to the Deccan as Viceroy, and Diler Khan was ordered to invade the feeble kingdom of Bijapur, on the pretext that Padshah Begum, the sister of the young king, Sikandar Adil Shah, who had been betrothed to one of Aurangzeb's sons had not been sent to Court. The princess surrendered herself, but Diler Khan continued his advance and the Regent of Bijapur appealed to Shivaji for help. Shivaji cut the communications of the invading force and sent his son, Sambhaji, to the relief of

the city, but Sambhaji deserted to the imperial army, and was rewarded for his treachery with the command of 7,000 horses, and the siege continued. Aurangzeb could not trust anybody for long, and ordered Diler Khan to seize Sambhaji who merited the confidence of none, and to send him to Court, but Diler Khan, more honourable than his master, allowed his guest to escape. Meanwhile, Shivaji had cut off supplies both from the besieging troops and from Aurangabad, their source of supply. In acknowledgement of his aid Shivaji received a grant of all the territory which he had conquered in the Karnataka and the Bijapur State recognised Vyankoji as his vassal, not its own.

Shivaji had then reached the zenith of his power. "He had freed the bulk of the Marathi-speaking people. By his new alliance with Bijapur and Golconda, and still more by the chain of fortresses which he had built from Bednor to Tanjaur, he had secured his conquests.

Aurangzeb had always affected to despise his great opponent, whom he styled "the mountain rat" but was at length compelled to recognise that he was a great captain.

His younger son, Rajaram, was enthroned in Raigarh on his death, but Sambhaji, displaying unwonted energy, secured the allegiance of the greater part of the army, entered Raigarh, confined his younger brother, and, summoning the boy's mother before him, grossly insulted her, accused her of having poisoned his father, and put her to a cruel and lingering death. He was enthroned as Maharaja in August, 1680, and it was in the following year that the young Akbar sought an asylum with him. Sambhaji, while receiving him, saluted him as Emperor and held out some hope that he would help him to dethrone his father, but first occupied himself in an unsuccessful attempt to seize some of the ports of the Konkan. Thus affairs stood when Aurangzeb, at the end of 1681, appeared once more in the Deccan, where he was doomed to spend the remainder of

his long reign in the vain attempt to crush the power of the Marathas.

Ali Adil Shah II of Bijapur and Abdullah Kutab Shah of Golconda had died in 1672 and had been succeeded, the former by his son Sikandar, a child of four, and the latter by his son-in-law, Abul Hassan. Diler Khan had been obliged to raise the siege of Bijapur before Shivaji's death and had been disgraced and recalled at the time when Muazzam was recalled from the Deccan in 1680 to aid his father in Rajasthan. Bahadur Khan was then again appointed Viceroy of the Deccan.

For three years after his arrival in the Deccan Aurangzeb was occupied in the attempt to suppress Sambhaji, now a powerful monarch who raided the territories of the Empire and Bijapur indiscriminately. The course of politics in the Deccan was so tortuous that it is impossible to follow it in detail. Prince Akbar, perceiving that Sambhaji had no intention of according him such assistance as would enable him to overcome his father, quarrelled with him and left his Court; and after a complicated series of intrigues with Marathas and Portuguese and a raid into his fathers territory, in which he was defeated, sailed early in 1687 for Persia, and in 1688 reached the Court of Sulaiman at Isfahan.

End of Aurangzeb

In the last campaign of his life, after Shivaji's death, Aurangzeb staked all the wealth and manpower of the Empire on a final effort to reduce the Marathas. The Mughal armies overthrew every obstacle in their path, Golconda and Bijapur collapsing like dykes swept away in a flood, the Maratha forts falling one by one after desperate resistance, till finally Jinji was

reached where Shivaji's second son Rajaram still kept alive the flame of Maratha resistance. The Jesuit Fathers had admired Shivaji's fortifications of Jinji and the epic siege of that place justified their admiration. The Mughal assaults failed, the huge imperial armies wasted away with hunger and disease, the Emperor, weighed down with age and disillusion, staggered back towards the North, all about him the fear of rebellion and the crumbling of an empire. He turned his face to the wall, and sighed out his life in bitter grief. Under his pillow was found a document concluded with the remarks, "Never trust your sons and ever keep in mind the saying : The world of a King is barren."

His body was hurried through empty streets and none of his subjects mourned his passing. He was buried in a simple grave in the little hamlet of Khuldabad. And yet there was one man who remembered a certain act of kindness that Aurangzeb had done him long ago. Shivaji's grandson, Sahu Raje, now King of Marathas, came in State to pray by Aurangzeb's grave. He wished to show his gratitude for that generous impulse that had caused Aurangzeb to grant his daughter Zannat-un-Nisa's prayer not to interfere with the young Maratha's religion.

Chapter Seven

Religious Policy of Shivaji

Justice Ranade in his classic essay, "The Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra" emphasised the role of the saints in helping the movement in preparing the ground for the political upsurge. Since then , it has been customary to view the religious ferment in Maharashtra as a major factor which laid the foundation of the "Maharashtra Dharma", a term ascribed to saint Ramdas, and an ideological constraint which has a deep and abiding influence on Shivaji and his age.

In pan-Indian context, the early centuries of the second millenium A. D., before and after Turkish conquest of the North Indian plains, have been centuries of unusual religious ferment. This affected every part of India, altered the contours of belief patterns, led to the emergence of multifarious sects and cults, including at least one major religious faith that of Sikhism. The deep impact of Vaishnavism manifested in the universal Krishna and Rama worship, the virtual exclusion of godlings other than Vishnu (in the form of incarnations), Shiva and Shakti from the popular pantheon, reflects the abiding influence of this strain.

Above all, this religious movement as it spreads from

Chaitanya and Sankaradeo in the East to Kabir, Nanak, Eknath, Ramdas, Tukaram and Basवेश्वर was first and foremost a passionate appeal for sincere, genuine faith uncontaminated by ritual or cant; it was an expression of fervour, devotion and total commitment to beloved deity who filled the devotee with his love. Secondly, it was an equally insistent protest against the inequities of the caste system, against faith-ordained privileges as sanctified by the Brahmanic order. It vehemently proclaimed the unity of manhood before God, his love and regard for his devotee, however humble he may be. Finally, it was an affirmation of a moral ordeal, of a recognition that the good man could exist only in a good society, and that it is the duty of every man of goodwill to bring such a society into existence. The desired society had been in existence till the corrosive element of corruption vitiated it; its restoration was both sanctioned and required by faith.¹

The setting for this ideological upsurge which had the deepest impact on society has to be kept in mind. It came into being, to repeat in an age when Brahmanic dominance and ritual were paramount. Caste with its ramifications was the dominant social framework. In Maharashtra, especially in Western Maharashtra, the power system was characterised by the presence of petty, revenue consuming chieftains, who were the real masters of the countryside and who were only very loosely controlled by the overlord power.

A significant factor was the nature of folk religion, especially in Maharashtra where the terrain limited the perceptive horizon of both the upper and the agrarian-cultivating classes. Anthropologists have shown and prof. Kosambi too has emphasised, the presence of local deities with primeval origins in the Pantheon of the village folk; each and every village had its patron deity and most of the poorer, especially the service class and the craftsman communities worshipped in their particular shrines, often representation of mother goddesses. Such formulations were but indifferently integrated with the

Brahmanic doctrinal system, propounded by the Brahmanic doctrines; they represented an additional dimension added on to the Brahmanism of the books, the latter forming only a part of the religious culture even of the upper classes.

Caste always has been a regional formation in its actual expression, its contours in its marital and commensal association, being essentially regional. Much of the poorer stratum was free of the ritual requirements of Brahmanic presence: These castes had their own priests. Purdah and child marriages were unknown; divorce and levirate were common. Women enjoyed an equal or near equal status and what in the Brahmanised sectors could mean disgrace, could be among them, offset by minor penalties. To assume, therefore, that the new religious formulation expressed itself in the context on a monolith Hinduism dominated by the Brahmins, would be to misrepresent the social set-up of the medieval age.

Furthermore, since a number of the saints, particularly the more influential ones were themselves Brahmins. This movement can be said to be sparked by the dissidents and the more sensitive among this caste who were dissatisfied with the "wordliness" of their fellow Brahmins and who in their strivings for more satisfying forms and faith, had been led into acts which the orthodoxy viewed as wayward. Marital connection with low caste women was one such aberration; to legitimise such alliance miracles had to be shown, sometimes posthumous, as in the case of Malopant. In a number of other cases, as in Eknath who fed a hungry Mahar or Chokhamela, an outcaste who entered the out-of-bounds, sacred portals of the Pandharpur Temples, miracles are said to have occurred to absolve and deliver them from the orthodox wrath.

The upsurge and renaissance as it developed in Maharashtra and its social and religious impact, was thus not very different from what it was in the rest of the country. It was certainly different inasmuch as each regional formation is a

variant on the pan Indian model, has its own particularities in its actual manifestation. Kinship, caste and land revenue to mention only three varieties of Indian life betray this diversity in unity, to use a stock phrase.

The dialectical relationship between the orthodoxy and the protest movement is a feature which every great religion has and which is manifest in an individual form at particular time and region. In great part, in pre-modern societies, this dissent has been the reflection of the unequal economic and social structure which has discriminated against the poor and low, which has supported ritual and privilege and given strength to the priestly and landholding classes. Further more, in the concrete social formation which have come into being within Hinduism, caste autonomy has been more often the rule than the exception; the poorer castes often attached not amalgamated with the Hindu ethos and society and largely outside the Brahmins, have had their own internal culture patterns, sympathetic to the urge for genuineness and humanism propagated by the saints.

Even within the Brahmin periphery, there has existed, at least since the emergence of the Bhakti, even the Buddhist movement, a strong element which has protested against too stringent an interpretation of the discriminatory regulations and a too literal devotion to ritual and formalism. Moreover, the orthodoxy has also been never too averse to legitimise those in power since the Mauryas, and there have been innumerable cases where ruling lineages have been ennobled and legitimised as a part of the ruling hierarchy.

The recognition given to the Bhosles not by Gangabhat alone but also by Jai Singh of Amber and their consecration as Sisodias is an instance of this accommodation on the part of the law-givers.

In this atmosphere of accommodation and flux, even the Muslim communities were organised on caste lines and came

to be recognised as such. There was considerable agreement among the two sections of the ruling class - The shifting nobility of the Sultanates and the traditional one of the Maratha country - and the minuscule neo-converts to Islam were still steeped in their pre-conversion caste culture. This was the case more in Eastern Maharashtra where the Sultanates had their bases.

It would thus be misleading to postulate an anti-Muslim bias in the religious upsurge which preceded Shivaji and in the polity and the ethos which he created; his movement too can hardly be called a "liberation" movement. The Deccan Sultanates since the beginning of the 17th century were declining brittle structures; their policies in their days of prime had not been iconoclastic and in the last resort, their system had hardly penetrated the insulation provided to the countryside by the indigenous Sardars. There never was any "enslavement" which would require to be eliminated by a liberation process particularly in Western Maharashtra.²

Shivaji's Social Policy

Shivaji, it has to be recognised, was primarily a man of action. In his brief life of fifty-three years, he packed more active campaigning than quiet policy deliberations. His genius thus tended more towards expansion than consolidation; creation than slow building up. He did establish a broad based top echelon administrative system, headed by the Ashta Pradhan, his advisory and directive body to assist him in day-to-day administration, but he neither had the time nor the inclination to tamper or disturb the age-old institutions of the socio-political system. At best, he can be said to have laid down broad lines of policy orientations which could have been developed by his successors, had they been able to; but much of his legacy was lost in the holocaust which shook Maharashtra, particularly the Western region, in the period after his death.

Shivaji was by no means a fanatic; he was much more a pragmatic leader of men, judging men and matters shrewdly and purposively. He was undoubtedly a believing Hindu, his attachment to his faith being one of the deepest formative factors which he inherited from his mother and his childhood associates. The Brahmanic ethos, moreover, was one of the most important forces for his legitimation, even for mobilisation. His sovereign status as a Chhatrapati was accepted certainly more by his dazzling achievements but also by the recognition given to it by the pundits, the epitome of orthodox Brahmins, the recognised law-givers. This was essential in a medieval setting; in neighboring Ahmednagar and Bijapur, a parallel role was performed by the Ulema and the Sufi.

Shivaji's personal religious affiliation was, however, no bar to his broad humanitarian sympathies, even less to his essentially pragmatic political insight. He needed mobilisation both of men and resources and neither could he had, if he had sympathies which were either limited or exclusive. He fought against Ahmednagar, against Bijapur, against the Mughals, against a host of Maratha Sardars, at a time even against his brother, but he never penalised a person for what he says, for his personal religious sympathies or affiliations.

For one, this catholicity or breadth of vision was owing to an early environment and training. Whether deliberately or inadvertently, he had experienced deprivation, seen poverty first-hand, passed his childhood among people, simple, hardworking, wronged but proud, traditional, self reliant and accustomed to fighting and the use of weapons. No school could have been better devised for instilling into the young man, respect for man, for his beliefs and rights.

Thus, in an age when for upper class regal or semi-regal potentates, woman per se was more an object of use and enjoyment than a living human being; when captured women were legitimately the "property" of the victor; Shivaji had a

deep respect for women in any condition. In 1657, when presented with a beautiful Muslim girl seized from Kalyan, he remarked, "If my mother Jija Bai had looked as well as you do, I too should have looked as handsome ". An observation like this which placed a humble captive girl on par with the Queen mother, the most revered figure in his court, automatically established a precedent and a moral; there must be no molestation of woman afterwards and there was none. Neither in peace nor in war did a women suffer from Shivaji's hands or within his knowledge.

While returning from the Karnatak expedition he was opposed by one Desai, the Kiledar, who was overpowered. His wife fell into the hands of Sukhoji Gaikwad, an officer in the army of Shivaji. Sukhoji raped her. The incident terribly upset Shivaji. He ordered Gaikwad to be blinded first and then put into prison till his death.

Bhikaji Gujar, the Watandar of Babji, similarly molested a helpless housewife. His watan was confiscated and his feet were amputated.

With equal depth and sincerity, Shivaji respected the symbols of religion other than his own. No Quran, no mosque suffered at his hands. Whenever a copy of the Quran fell into his hands, he treated it with reverence and handed it over to one entitled to hold it. Likewise, no *mujawir* and no beneficiary of religious grant was deprived of it ; invariably, it was confirmed and the beneficiary was allowed to enjoy his grant.

Rather, he made fresh grants to Muslim saints whom he respected. The one to Bawa Yaqut of Kelsi is still held by his descendants.

Bawa Yakut Sarwari (Suhrawardi) came from Hyderabad (Sindh) via. Bankat and settled in Kelsi. Bawa believed in oneness of God and brotherhood of men. Before proceeding on his campaigns Shivaji sought his blessings. Shivaji conferred

on him a *Jagir* of 653 acres of land, on which a shrine was built. In the document of grant Shivaji eulogised his divinity in the following words :

“Hazrat Bawa Yakut bahwat thorube’ i.e., Bawa Yakut is a great divine.”

The Bawa died in 1681 A.d. one year after Shivaji’s passing away

Another Muslim Saint Maoni Bawa, also attracted Shivaji’s attention. Before proceeding for the Karnataka expedition Shivaji paid a visit to Padgaon to seek blessing of Maoni Bawa. There are still preserved three letters that were exchanged between them.³

The first letter dated 3rd May, 1678 appearing in Lekh 733 gives the details of the supply of food and provisions made available by Shivaji for those who paid a visit to Maoni Bawa. In 1679 Shivaji again visited Maoni Bawa to make arrangements for day-to-day expenditure of the shrine. On 24th March, 1680, Shivaji gifted a tobacco shop to Maoni Bawa as a permanent source of income to the shrine.

His trust in the Muslims is indicated by the fact that some of the persons closest to him were Muslims. Madari, a farrash was one of his personal servants who helped him in the escape from Agra; Mulla Haidar served as his Persian scribe and correspondent and was also entrusted with an important mission to Bahadur Khan, the Mughal viceroy in the Deccan. Mulla Haidar, in fact served Shivaji till his death and latter, having been maltreated by Sambhaji, Joined the Mughals and was the chief Quazi in Delhi in 1700.

There is like wise an uniformity in spoliation. In his two raids on Surat, in his offensive in Karnatak and spoliation of Vengurla, Hubai and other rich urban centres, there was no favour shown to Hindus or that Muslim traders were marked out for worse treatment. When he struck, none of the rich

escaped; Brahmins were certainly spared to an extent but in any case, they were not an affluent group.

His army and navy was a varied collection of different communities, both Hindu and Muslim. None was excluded, not the Mahars particularly, a near untouchable community, one of the most war-like ones in Maharashtra, which furnished soldiers not only to the Marathas but also to the British. Pathan deserters from Bijapur were enrolled in Shivaji's army and his chief naval commanders, Daulat Khan and Siddi Misri were Muslims. There was obviously no distinction of birth in Shivaji's army.

Shivaji's letter to Aurangzeb

Shivaji's protest against Jaziya, addressed to Aurangzeb illustrates his benevolent policy of religious liberalism. It deserves to be quoted in excerpts :

"To the emperor Alamgir, this firm well-wisher Shivaji, deeply grateful for divine favour and your kindness as clear as daylight, begs to inform your Majesty as follows :

"I returned from your presence without seeking your permission. It is my misfortune. But I am ready to serve you in every possible way. May your kindness be felt by everybody. As a well-wisher I am placing some matters before you.

"Recently, it has come to my ears that owing to your war against me, your treasury has become empty. You have decided to meet the expenditure through the imposition of Jaziya on the Hindus.

"Your Majesty, Akbar, the founder of your empire ruled for fifty-two years. He had adopted the excellent policy of treating with peace and equality, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Dadupanthis, Stargazers, Malakis, Atheists, Brahmins

and Jains in fact all the communities. His aim was to ensure the welfare and protection of all. That is why he came to be known as the 'Jagadguru'. The result was that to which direction he turned, success and glory attended his arms. He brought most of the country under his sway.

"After him Nuruddin Jahangir, ruled for twenty-two years. He led a life full of good deeds and became immortal. Shahjahan ruled for thirty-two years. He too made his life fruitful through good deeds. That is why these rulers were successful in which ever direction they turned. During their rule a number of provinces and forts came under their sway. They have passed away, but their names endure. their greatness is beyond description. One measure of their greatness is that you have tried to imitate them without success. Now you are at a loss to understand why this should be so.

"The previous rulers, had they so desired, had certainly the power to impose Jaziya. But they felt that all men, big and small, were the children of God, and all religions, but means to the worship of the Almighty. they never allowed the feeling of religious hatred even to touch them. the memory of their kindness and the good deeds they did, is always fresh in the world. All men, great and small, pray and bless them. During their rule the people had peace, and as a result, their glory increased day-by-day and success attended their affairs.

"But during your regime many provinces and forts have gone out of your hands. The remaining provinces and forts too will be lost to you. I will not spare any efforts to ruin the provinces. Your subjects are crushed. the income from your *Paraganas* and *Mahals* is decreasing day-by-day. It is difficult to realise even one thousand from places the income where of was one lakh previously. Poverty is striking the kings and princes. The plight of noblemen

and *Manasabadars* is apparent to everybody. At present your soldiers are discontented, The Moslems are in anguish and the Hindus are scorched. Men are pining for bread. They are red in face because they are striking their mouths with their hands.

"They are in such deep distress, and yet you have imposed Jaziya on them. How could you do this? This evil news will spread from east to west. People will say : 'the emperor of Hindustan has taken a begging bowl and is out to realise Jaziya from Brahmins, Jains, Sadhus, Jogis, Sanyasis, Bairagis, the poor and the starving people. He takes pride in doing so. He is laying in dust the name of the Taimur dynasty. Such will be the deep feeling of the people.

"Your Majesty, in the Quran, God has been described as the *Rabbul Almeen*; the Lord of the entire universe, not as *Rabbul Musalmeen*; the Lord of the Musalmans. In fact, Islam and Hinduism are both beautiful manifestations of the divine spirit. The call for prayers is given in the mosques, the bells ring to the divine glory in the temples. Any-one bearing fanaticism and religious hatred must be said to be acting against the commands of God. to presume to draw lines on these pictures is 'verily' to lay blame on the Divine Artist (God).

"To point out blemishes in any of his creations only means that you are blaming the creator. Do not do so.

"To be just, Jaziya cannot be justified on any grounds. It is an innovation in India. This is unjust. If you feel that on grounds of religion and justice the imposition of this tax is essential, you should first realise it from Raja Jai Singh. for, he is the leader of the Hindus. It will not then be difficult to realise it from this well-wisher."⁴

Such a letter both dignified and defiant could not have

been penned by a men with narrow sympathies and sectarian preferences : rather, he would have seen in it an adequate justification for a parallel polity of persecution directed against the emperor's coreligionists. That Shivaji was above this shortsighted attitude shows beyond doubt his broad humanistic policy.

Respect for all Religions

Shivaji at peace, both with the Emperor and with Sultan of Bijapur, had leisure to perfect his administration of his government which was organized in eight departments, each presided over by a responsible minister. The Prime Minister had the title of Peshwa. The machinery of the administration was simple but efficient. The old institution of hereditary office was set aside and Shivaji, recognising the danger of powerful feudal aristocracy, granted no fiefs. Public servants of all ranks, civil and military, were paid directly from the treasury. All were liable to summary dismissal for misconduct or inefficiency. Shivaji was accessible to all his subjects, and commended such devotion as no other contemporary ruler in India received. The districts permanently occupied by him enjoyed better government than in all the neighbouring provinces, either of the Empire or of Bijapur.

Sir Richard Temple rightly observes that : "The Maratha country is strategically important as well as highly picturesque. Much of it lies in the bosom or near the skirts of the ghat mountains. Their importance is striking. They nourish a resolute, enduring almost audacious spirit among their inhabitants. It is thus that these regions became the cradle of greatness, power and Empire by the Marathas."⁵

Shivaji stands on a lofty pedestal in the hall of the world history, not because he was a champion of Maratha cause, but because he was an ideal-house-holder, an ideal king and an unrivalled nation builder. He was devoted to his mother, loving

to his children, true to his wives, and scrupulously pure in his relation with other women. His close relations were refused any administrative favours.

Shivaji had never thought of founding a theocratic State for Hindus. The 'Pune Mahzar' (proceedings of court) of 1657, in which he was present is quite eloquent in this respect. It includes the names and designations of officers and Judges, i.e. Quazis of his new Government, Quazi Abdullah Bin Quazi Mohammed Hakim-o-Shara' and Quazi Habib Quazi etc. He used to deliver judgements in litigations amongst Muslims in consultations with Muslim Quazis. This fact categorically proves that Shivaji did not start on his mission by eradicating Muslim influence from his Government even in the year 1657.

Not only Muslims but Shivaji had an utter regard for the personages of all the religions. Bernier's Travelogue reveals his respect for Christian Priests and their religion. While mentioning the report of two Ethiopian Ambassadors to the court of Aurangzeb, regarding the sack of Surat, he says :

"I forgot to mention that during the pillage of sourat Seva-Gi, the holi Seva-Gi respected the habitation of the reverend Father Ambrose, the compochian Missionary. 'The Frankist Padrys are good men', he said, 'and shall not be molested'. He spared also the house of a deceased Dalal or gentile broker of the Dutch, because assured that he has been very charitable while alive."⁶

He has completely established his sway over all the territory between Surat and Goa. His subjects like him are all idol worshippers; however, Shivaji is a very tolerant to other religions. He has been regarded as the most diplomatic statesman in this part of the country. In spite of the presence of Prince Muazzam in the Deccan, Shivaji has been conquering forts. Recently he has captured Bhivandi and Kalyan near Bombay. We desire that they continue to remain in his possession. Because as a neighbouring power, Shivaji can be

safely accepted in preference to a Mughal general. Shivaji's intense regard for any religion and any women spread his reputation throughout the country. Even his hostile critic Khafi Khan was obliged to say that :

"Shivaji has always striven to maintain the honour of the people in his territories. He entirely abstained from disgraceful acts and was careful to maintain the honour of the women and children of Muslims when they fell into his hands. He never molested religious places like Masjids. It was his policy to respect religious books like Quran, if obtained in plunder. Besides it was a rule in Shivaji's army never to molest women, children or holy-men in the course of raid."⁷

All this national expansion proceeded from the energy of one man. Shivaji was the central power-house of the new Maharashtra. He had the supreme royal gift of quickly judging everyman's character and capacity and choosing the best instrument for every task that he wanted to get done. But he was a self-taught man. His administrative and military system perfectly suited to his country and age were his own creations. Unlike Ranjit Singh and Mahadji Sindhia, he had no French Advisor. Everything proceeded from his own heart and brain. Therefore, the historians of Shivaji, at the end of a careful study of all the records, are bound to admit that Shivaji was not only the maker of the Maratha Empire but also the greatest constructive genius of Medieval India. States fall, empires breakup, dynasties become extinct, but the memory of Shivaji, with all his religious generosity, remains as a nation's Hero, an imperishable historical legacy in the annals of the builders of India. In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru:

"Shivaji was the symbol of resurgent Hindu nationalism drawing inspiration from the old classics. Courageous and possessing the quality of leadership, he built up the Marathas as a strong, unified, fighting group, gave them

a national background , and made them a formidable power which broke up the Mughal Empire and continued to grow till it dominated India.”⁸

Warren Hastings wrote in 1784 :

“The Marathas possess, alone of all the people of Hindustan and Deccan, a principal of national attachment, which is strongly impressed on the minds of all individuals of the nation, and would probably unite their chiefs, as in one common cause, if any great danger were to threaten the General State.”

Commenting on this Jawaharlal Nehru writes :

“Probably this national sentiment of theirs was largely confined to the Marathi-speaking area. Nonetheless the Marathas were catholic in their political and military system, as well as their habits and there was a certain internal democracy among them. All this gave strength to them. Shivaji, though he fought Aurangzeb, freely employed Muslims.”⁹

The British Historian Dennis Kinkaid records :

“In spite of Shivaji’s long struggle, it is remarkable how little religious animosity or intolerance Shivaji displayed. His kindness to Catholic priests is in agreeable contrast to the (largely Marathi speaking) Indian territories of the Portuguese. Even his enemies admire his extreme respect for Musalmans Priests, for mosque and for the Quran. The Muslim historian Khafi Khan, who can not mention Shivaji in his chronicle without adding an epithet of abuse, nevertheless, acknowledges that Shivaji never entered a conquered town without taking measures to safeguard the mosque from damage; whenever the Quran came into his possession he treated it with the same respect as if it had been one of the sacred works of his own faith; and that when ever his men captured Muslim ladies they were

brought to Shivaji, who looked after them as they were his own wards till he could return them to their relations. It is perhaps worth remembering that this century in Europe was noteworthy for the activities in Italy and Germany and of Cromwell in Ireland."¹⁰

From all accounts it is clear that Shivaji had a firm belief in secularism not of the western type, but of Indian conception which the saints had termed as *Sarwa Dharama Sambhava*.

One day a minstrel recited one of Saint Tukaram's poems to Shivaji, who was so moved by it that he sent a messenger begging Tukaram to come and make his home with him, promising wealth and comfort. Tukaram replied in a poem :

"Prince, your torches, umbrellas of State, and richly caparisoned horses, your pomp and splendour and kingly ways are not for me. I have fled from the world, and you want to entice me back. Ah, let me be alone, solitary in silence. You promise me the robes of state and a palace. These would be wasted on me. Forests, meadows, are my dwellings. Moist grown rocks are my couch. The sky above me is my cloak."

When Shivaji read this he for a while remained silent. Then he left his camp and wandered alone over the rolling yellow low-land of the Maratha plateau till he found Tukaram. He fell at his feet. He tore out his clothes and put on the rags of an ascetic and sat humble in silence, neither spoke.

And here Shivaji's followers found their master after a long and anxious search. They begged him to return to his camp. He would not listen to them. In despair they sent a word to his mother pressing her with their entreaties. Jijabai came and upbraided his son that he had encouraged his followers to rebel and now he was abandoning them; there were many saints in India but only one man with the destiny of Shivaji and

added, your cause now needed heroes and armies rather than minstrels and hermits. Sorrowfully Shivaji acknowledged justification of her arguments and returned with his followers. He did not again see Tukaram, who died the same year. But for the rest of his life he remained in close contact with Ramdas, Tukaram's saintly contemporary whom he also met in 1649.

Ramdas, even as a child, showed his inclination for the life of an ascetic. He fled from home to visit shrines of India. He finally settled down in a temple of the hero-god Rama near Satara. His temple-home became a centre of pilgrimage. As soon as Shivaji heard of Ramdas he wrote to him, who replied as Tukaram had done with a poem. But while Tukaram sang the praises of renunciation, Ramdas sent to the new hero-king along with a poem presents of handful of earth, pebbles, and horse-dung. Shivaji was with his mother when this unusual gift arrived. Jijabai, for all his religious enthusiasm, was a liberal minded woman. Indignantly she stared at Ramdas's present and asked if this was a proper thing to send to a gentleman. But Shivaji, after a moment's thought, said, "It is a symbol and a prophecy. the earth means I shall conquer, the pebbles are the fortresses with which I shall hold it, and the horse dung signified my cavalry for which I shall become famous."

Shivaji wrote constantly to Ramdas asking his advice on matters of government, administration and policy. At the height of his power he visited Ramdas and bowing before him, gave him a document which was a deed bestowing on the saint all his kingdom. Ramdas said, "I accept the gift on behalf of God. Take back your kingdom and rule it as God given Kingdom in his name. govern not as an unfettered autocrat but humbly as deputy of Heaven."¹¹

To mark his reverence for Ramdas, Shivaji made all his followers greet each other with the word "Ram" and to this day all Marathas, in their salutations, continue to obey Shivaji's directions.

Modern Totalitarians would perhaps express surprise that the Marathas should choose for their word of greeting not the name of a successful Ruler but that of a saint. finally in tribute to the pilgrims who thronged round Ramdas, Shivaji chose as a national banner of his Kingdom the ochre flag that pilgrims bear on their long pilgrimage.

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Chapter Eight

Politico-Economic Policy of Shivaji

Shivaji, like any other major historical figure, has to be viewed in a perspective, of his age and his land, in the background of time and space. To see him as an embodiment of values which are essentially the creations of the twentieth century is to do both him and his age a great injustice.

To provide this perspective, it is necessary to review briefly both the space and time, the land in which Shivaji was born and in which he functioned and his age in its economic, ideological and political climate.

The Physical Base

Since the age, when Justice Ranade wrote, the physical features of the Maratha land and its character, dominated by hills and forts has been seen as an essential element of the ferment which came into being in the Maratha land. This is true; the land of Shivaji was hilly, inaccessible, easily defensible and since isolated, relatively insulated against outsider intrusions and influences.

This land was, however, only a part of the Marathi-

speaking acumen. As we know today, the Marathi-speaking land extends from Bhandara in the East to Bombay in the West from Dahanu in the North to Belgaum in the South. On the North it stretches along the Gujarati and Hindi speaking regions, in the South-East, with the Telgu land and further South and South-East, with the Kannada lands. Only a sector of this extensive region, more particularly the Nasik-Pandharpur-Kolhapur region was the land which formed Shivaji's kingdom and was the stage for his activities.

Much of this region never formed a part of the Maratha ruled lands, during the post Yadava period, till the Bhosles were established in Nagpur. Marathwada formed part of Ahmednagar and was then Mughal; Khandesh had a Sultanate which was closer to Gujarat than to the Deccan and was then held by the Mughals. Nearly four fifth of the Marathi speaking lands were thus outside the orbit of the resurgence which came into being in Western Maharashtra, the Poona-Satara-Kolhapur region.

The hilly terrain, as has been said often, provided a particular orientation to its people. made them hardy and independent. The numerous hill top forts made it easily defensible and rendered penetration, especially by force, difficult. Of course, for a determined enemy like Aurangzeb, it did not present insuperable difficulties for immediate occupation but it was certainly impossible to hold the country for long, in face of a sullen and hostile populace and defiant redoubts serving as their base. The invading force could destroy as Aurangzeb did but it could not hope to build on the debris of what it had destroyed.

The physical base of Western Maharashtra thus helped the people to preserve the traditional structure and ethos tenaciously, served to create an essentially conservative society, largely insulated against outside intrusions and influences. This then, was the land of Maratha Sardars par excellence, of

the *Watan* of social formations which were the Indian variants of feudalism. The Deccan Sultanates, of Ahmednagar and Bijapur had penetrated these regions only peripherally; even when technically suzerain over these lands, they left them to their real rulers, the *Watan* holding Maratha Sardars.

The hilly terrain also helped to develop local formations within the country; the local Sardars holding a fort and the areas surrounding it could hold his own not only against the distant overlord but also his immediate neighbour. The very real fragmentation of political power at the grass root level even when at the surface there was an apparent uniformity under a distant sovereign, was a consequence of the physical base and the extremely poor means of transport and communication.

Within this hilly region, there were pockets which were actually and potentially rich in agricultural wealth; the Satara-Kolhapur region is an example. However, the lack of sustained investment in land, the lack of markets and the extortive nature of the economic system inhibited any real development or breakthrough. Much of the land especially towards the North, was too hilly and physically disturbed, to permit development, any way, without investment and innovative skill, hardly available in the 16th-17th centuries.

The high Sahyadri Ranges were certainly pierced at a number of points which gave the inland plateau an access to the sea-coast plains. But between Goa in the South and Bassein in the North, there were few effective ports until the English developed Bombay in the 18th century. The major North-South trade lines too bypassed the difficult hilly region, using the more convenient Nasik-Daultabad-Ahmednagar-Bijapur route, the westernmost of the North-South arterial communication line.

By far thus, the western Maharashtra region existed as an autarchic enclave which was largely indifferent to outside currents and which was left alone even by the powers which were nominally ruling over it. This isolation which persisted till the seventeenth century, when a charismatic personality made it the pivot of the Indian continent for a century and more, shows first and foremost that man makes history, transcending limitations and often turning the very limitations to their advantage.

Society at the turn of 17th Century

As in other parts of India, the caste-system was an over-arching framework according to which the social system was organised; in similar fashion, its configuration was essentially regional, the castes being limited to the Marathi-speaking region or a part of it.

The dominant castes in most of Western Maharashtra were the Marathas. They were the dominant landowners, both big and small. The upper echelon landholders claimed Rajput lineage, stressed their origins to non Maharashtrian regions, primarily Rajasthan, establishing linkages, real or imaginary, with the dominant ruling houses like Rathor, Sisodiya or Chauhan. The cultivators, generally owning the land they cultivated were termed *Kunbis*, a term which finds wide usages by the 19th century.

A significant sector of the population was formed by the lower castes, traditionally regarded as unclean, not always untouchables, though the latter category would also be encompassed within this category. The numerous artisan castes, formed the upper periphery of this order, bridging the distance between the *Kunbi* and the untouchable castes like the Mahar and the still more lowly service castes. These were the agricultural labourers, the landless ones, though they did receive grants of lands, if they own the favour of the land

holders, particularly the *Watandars*, By and far, however, the ownership of land, with all its privileges, was vested in the Marathas.

The Brahmins in Maharashtra lacked the ritual status which distinguished them in the South or the pre-eminence which the Zamindari rights gave them in the Gangetic region. By and large, they were the custodians of the sacred lore and of its concrete expressions in the form of temples, pilgrim places and the like. Some of them were also village officials like Kulkarni though this was not obviously the rule. Necessarily, they were the transmitters of the sacred lore of Hinduism, transmitting the high Hindu tradition to the local population. Some of the most significant and influential of the poets and saints in Maharashtra, figures like Jnaneshwar and Eknath and Tukaram and Ramdas were Brahmins. They served as advisers to rulers and nobles and in a sense, were the ideological censors who maintained normative balance of the social system.

That this normative definitional structure was not a behaviour pattern enjoined by the sacred lore but was conditioned by actual circumstances, has to be kept in mind. The legitimation of genealogical fabrications for high and influential lineages was one such function. So also was the effort to maintain the status complex of the varna system, if and when required, by use of state power. Equally significant was the emphasis placed on genuine piety and a just and equitable order which inhibited a contemptuous attitude towards the low born an attitude universally advocated by the saints and reformers. The emergence of the highly charged religious fervour, the *bhakti* advocating an egalitarian ethos, translating esoteric formulations like *adwait* in terms meaningful to the peasant and the humbler toilers was essentially a task undertaken by these teachers. At the base, was their rebellion against the ritualism and cant which they felt had come to characterise the faith of the privileged and which militated against the basic injunctions of humanity, fairness and faith.

As in a hilly people and a poor one, the women held a high place, working side by side with their menfolk in earning a livelihood. Traditionalism did not mean for them incarceration within the four walls, as it had come to mean for their upper class sisters. Brahmanic rigorism had not yet penetrated to the level of the poorer peasant echelons and practices like child marriages, prohibition or widow remarriage were confined largely to the upper castes. Multi-wived establishments were however the rule in upper privileged echelons, with discarded and brooding spouses transferring their resentment to their children.

It is difficult to say much about the Muslim population in Western Maharashtra for it does not seem that, in the seventeenth century, there was any sizeable Muslim group. There was certainly no Muslim ruling class in Western Maharashtra as for instance in towns like Ahmednagar and Bijapur. In any case, there does seem, as later evidence suggests, a gradual indigenisation of immigrant Muslim groups to the land they had come to live in ; and likewise, there appears to have been a minimal change in more of the convert communities other than their formal identification with the Muslim society.

The Revenue Administration

Agriculture formed the near total base of the economy in Western Maharashtra, as in the rest of India. Likewise, agriculture and the economy dependent on it remained a gamble in rains, the disastrous famine of 1629-30 with its catastrophic and long term consequences underlining this dependence.

Much of the cultivation was without any irrigational aid, though limited supply of water was available from the wells and tanks, both big and small, which abounded in the countryside. Most of the agricultural production was limited to food crops

but in some areas cash crops, mostly coarse cotton and oil seeds were also grown. Commercialised production for markets, particularly of cash crops, was possible only in favoured areas where both the soil and water supply were favourable, in the rest, subsistence level cultivation responded only to local requirements and consequently, was hardly remunerative.

Agriculture at this level yielded little surplus and this surplus was mopped up in the form of revenue. The political and power system depended nearly totally on the land revenue appropriated from the peasant and shared among the beneficiary classes in varying proportions. Generally forty per cent was seen as the *rajbhag* or the state share and collected in the shape of cash by a fixed rate or by sharing the crops.

The imperatives of the autarchic village society required the normal quantum of the *balutedars*, the service personnel comprising artisans, immediately necessary to the village. More developed markets requiring greater diversification of commodities and catering to relatively minor needs which the limited demand in the village found uneconomical to produce locally, were met by the *kasba* markets. The *kasba*, a larger than usual village or a small town was the political and economic focal point of the unit, around which the villages were grouped.

The major commercial and production centres concentrating mostly on textiles were in the North like Bhiwandi and Kalyan or in the Konkan or Dabhol, Rajapur and Vengurla; the English had a factory at Rajapur while the Dutch had a similar establishment at Vengurla.

While land revenue was the life blood of the state, urban taxes were also imposed, more on sales and exchange than on production. The social framework of the production processes were largely traditional and the artisan castes devoted to the production of individual commodities, were the main producers. Limited production for limited markets as for instance in the

village and small *kasbas* was carried on, the artisans providing both labour and capital; more commercialised and larger volume production was mostly by the putting out systems under which the raw materials were supplied by the ordering agency or their middleman—a system highly unfavorable to the craftsmen.

The standard of living of the artisans, even the favoured ones, was not noticeably better than the general run of the populace, the cultivators and the urban workers. The larger trading castes, the *baniyas* especially the Seths and *Sahukars* formed a distinctly affluent group—though again there were no trading marts like Surat or the magnates like the ones found in the town of Ahmedabad.

Watan and Watandari

Land, its produce and the privilege rights, emanating from the right to a share in its produce have always held a high place in the reckoning of the pro-modern peoples. In India too, land was not the only source of livelihood or affluence for an overwhelming majority of the people, it also formed the criterion of status and authority for those higher classes who were the beneficiaries of the political and revenue order.

In India, the superior oligarchy of the overlords, had, since the advent of the Turks, established a symbiotic relationship with the indigenous nobility, formed of Rajas, the Rais, or as known in the Marathi speaking regions, as Patils or Sardars. The indigenous strata formed the revenue appropriating classes directly concerned with the peasantry; they held land in their own right as the recompense for performing a variety of functions in the rural countryside. In actual practice, these rights held traditionally and passed on hereditarily made them both the leaders of the village society and its oppressors.

The *watan*—the right to hold land and to collect revenue

was one of the most crucial institutions in this order. Since such institutions in a society which lacked bureaucratic finesse based on minutely defined civil law, followed traditional patterns and could be stretched, the *watandar*, the holder of the *watan*, was much more than a functionary. At the higher level, he was a Sardar, holding a fort, maintaining an armed retinue, one with entry in the Courts of Bijapur and Ahmednagar, in brief a noble reacting with the superior, non-indigenous nobility of the Sultans. At the lower level, he was an important village or pargana official : a *Deshmukh* or a *Sardeshmukh*, a *Patil*. He was no scribe however. He wielded political authority, was in contact with higher echelons, was attended by a retinue and was generally looked upto and feared by the village folk.

Since the *watan* was thus the source of both status and power, it was one of the most prized and jealously held preogatives for which one could and did live and die. Technically, it was the gift of the state for a service rendered, for an office held; actually, it was the charter of a status system which ranged from a village *Deshmukh* to the Sardar, the mark of a privileged hierarchy. The *Sabhasad* mentions that Shivaji wrested the ryot from the hold of the *watandars* but this statement has to be taken with a grain of salt. In its actual operation, it could mean that he instituted checks which to an extent bridled them and prevented excessive oppression. The *Deshmukh* rights in Indapur, the *jagir* held by Shivaji, continued to be held by the Bhosles even after they had become Kings.

The Maratha socio-political system thus was imbued with the ethos of the *watans*, its network ranging from the *Chhatrapati* to the *Deshmukh*, *Patil* and *Kulkarni*, the village officials. The pre-Shivaji Sardars, the dominant ones like the Jedhes of Sindhkhed or the Mores of Javali, related the most of the *Deshmukhs* of Maval and with whom Shivaji had his first conflict belonged to this order. The Bhonsles, till Shahji's rise were the secondary beneficiaries of this system; the consolidation

of his power too was based on an assiduous assumption of these land rights.

What the *zamindari* was in the Northern Gangetic basin, the *giras* in Rajasthan, the *watan* was in Maharashtra, an analogous parallel institution the importance of which has to be recognised in order to comprehend the working of the Maratha system, both before and in the time of Shivaji. The role of the indigenous ruling class furnishes in fact the clue to much of Shivaji's own formulations and innovations.

17th Century Political Culture in Maharashtra

It has been shown above that the *watan* was the dominant institution of 17th century Western Maharashtra, that while the towns were radiating centres of a shallowly diffused Sultanate authority, the countryside was held by the Sardars, the apex beneficiaries of a hierarchy created by the *watan* order and which was interposed between the village folk and the external ruling oligarchy dependent on the Sultans.

The tenacity and the deep entrenchment of this system inhibited the penetration of the Sultan and his system in the countryside, denying it the grass root base which is the *sine qua non* of any stable or lasting political system. Nevertheless, the massed armed strength it represented, linked with the relative freedom it allowed to the traditionally existent order, led the Sardars to make their peace with the Sultans and to be inducted into their political system. This necessarily was not an allegiance felt as deeply as for instance by the Rajputs towards their Mughal overlords; nevertheless it could not be denied and had to be accepted. The ease with which allegiance could be switched from Ahmednagar to Bijapur and vice versa—as for instance by Shahji in his highly successful and pragmatic political-activity—is an index to the hold of the overlords over the *watandars*.

The inability of these political systems to develop deeper sources of authority also resulted in persistent internal and mutual strife which forms a rather bleak chapter of Deccan history during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. The collapse of the Bahmani kingdom in the middle of the 16th century furnished an opportunity to the local power holders to surface. The Mughal attack on Ahmednagar followed by the persistent pressure from the North, led to serious decline in the ability of the kingdoms to keep fissiparous forces at bay.

It was the tenacious defence of Ahmednagar by Malik Ambar which brought the Maratha Sardars to the forefront for he had no one to depend on but these traditional mobilisers of potential strength. Shahji emerged in response to this challenge and when Ahmednagar collapsed, switched over to Bijapur. He acted in the name of his overlords; but the successes he gained formally in their name, consolidated his power both in Maharashtra and in distant Karnataka. By the time Shahji died, he was the peer of the most powerful of the Bijapur nobles.

The structure of ethos in the *watandars* particularly among the higher ones, was based on family and caste. the appeal to the caste was a powerful level for mobilisation, linked as it was to the obligation of the superior to provide a decent living and recognised the worth of the people who had come to serve under him, The loyalty of his followers was primarily for him, their visible and effective leader, both in peace and war, their source for livelihood and gain. The universal ethos of faithfulness to 'salt', a universal norm in India, operated to secure the loyalty of other followers too, not of his caste.

Given this ethical background, imbued with a culture located in a terrain which favoured the rise of small autonomous units was paternalistic and acquisitive formally subordinate to the political system which could operate effectively to check what it conceived to be major threats to its own existence, the

watandar behaviour pattern was marked by strong individualism which gave rise to an endemic internal feuding. This was a reality which no one could understand better than Shivaji.

It is tempting to approximate this culture system with that of Rajasthan - and since Rajput origin was claimed by the more powerful and affluent Maratha houses, it would also be a plausible exercise. Certainly there were similarities; the fragmentation of political and military power was one; the close familial and kinship bond another, the concept of personal honour third and the strong caste base a fourth. Nevertheless, the Maratha country lacked the organised political bases which had been created by the Rajput clans, the Rathors, Sisodias, Kacchwahas and others - the focal points which mobilised the Rajput.

Western Maharashtra, the hilly and in the 17th century heavily forested region, between the Godawari in the North and the Krishna in the South, a region which was dotted with forts but which lacked large towns east of the Sahyadris, had not till then been penetrated effectively by the Sultans of Ahmednagar and Bijapur. Formally, it came to be included in their kingdom when the Sardars acknowledged its overlordship. But the insulation afforded by the traditionally powerful Sardars, the difficult terrain kept the presence of the outsiders to the minimum. It is by no means possible now even to hypothesize about the Muslim population in this region but obviously, it could not have been significant.

With the Muslim presence minimal, it is difficult to conceive how the 'Maratha renaissance' with its base in Western Maharashtra, could be seen as being stimulated by hostility to Muslims. Rather, it would appear that it expressed one of the more real problems in the region, the tension between the dominant Sardars and their people. The oppression

as such may not have been as much as it was in other regions of India, richer and more exploited- but to say that the relationship was without strain and cordial would be to deny a concrete reality.

Shivaji : His Political Career

It is by now well established by contemporary research that Shivaji's break with the past was hardly as decisive as had been made out . He did not do away with the traditional institutions, deeply entrenched in Maratha society at the grass root level; he did not, for instance, eliminate the *watandars*, the landholding middlemen who mediated between the distant ruler and the village folk. It is also recognised that Ramdas's influence on Shivaji's career or a formative impact which he is said to have had in shaping his political philosophy and policy. Freed of these myths, it is possible to see Shivaji in a better perspective, to appreciate him in the context of his time and milieu.

Shivaji was born at a time when the Western Deccan Sultanates were in deep and reversible crisis occasioned by the Northern Mughal offensive, which ended with not only their end but with the heralding of the Mughal end. It was an age when the ability of the Sultans to control their indigenious tributaries, the real ruling power in the land as has been said earlier, which was weak in the best of times, had suffered a further erosion leading to the emergence of several powerful chieftains in the more inaccessible areas. Karnatak thus had virtually thrown off the yoke - in other words, the chieftains ceased paying tribute to the Sultans and, entrenching themselves in their held territory, began to venture out more boldly than before in search of weaker neighbours as such fair game. In Western Maharashtra the Mores of Javli were powerful and had Shahji not gone towards Bangalore and Tanjaur, a collision between them would have been on the cards. The politico-military barometer was thus clearly indicating a period of uncertainty

and change in the Deccan the eclipse of a political order and its replacement by another.

It is difficult but possible to hypothesize the orientation which led Shivaji at a very young age when he was still in his teens, to feel and sense the uncertainty which the death of Malik Ambar engendered. It may have been a kind of hero worship for the distant father and a wish to excel him.

Poetic compositions as *bakhars* which emphasize the religious element in Shivaji's rise, also tend to stress the role of Jijabai in Shivaji's orientations. In fact, euologistic writers have blown up the part played by the three beneficent figures : Samarth Ramdas the saint, Jijabai the pious and dedicated mother and Dadaji Konddeo; they have been accorded a leading place in the legends which have come into being.

It is certainly possible that Jijabai had an impact upon her son much more than most mothers have; there is no doubt that so long as she lived - and she died in the fulness of years, after seeing her son crowned as Chhatrapati-she was supreme in her sphere, the management of the household.

The loss of her eldest son too certainly made her concentrate on the second; for him the mother became a close existential reality while the father was a distant, awesome figure. Shivaji's early life was in relative freedom, in rude and free surroundings, loved but not dotted over by his mother away from his father, developed a close bond between the mother and the son. There is, however, little authentic evidence to suggest that Shivaji imbibed a deep sectarian identity from her, one which conditioned him and his polity.

For one, genuine religious piety is distinct from sectarian identity, The latter is characterised primarily by attachment to external symbols and likewise by hostility to those social and cultural manifestations which are felt to be contrary to one's own affiliations; it is marked by orthodoxy which emphasised

conformity to a belief pattern propagated by a priestly or a similarly placed, largely birth determined group, which has a vested interest in maintaining sectarian symbols and their supporting client class. By and large, it lacks the *elan* of genuine piety which alone generates not toleration but appreciation of like emotion in others.

That Shivaji had this spark is certain; his respect for other faiths and their votaries and their symbols is evidence enough. This sympathy, he certainly imbibed in early years and most possibly from his mother, for it was neither political nor calculated. Like Akbar, in a different age and environment, Shivaji's religion though pegged to a specific faith, was wide enough to encompass genuine spiritual emotion.

But from this to suggest that Shivaji's early activity was in a sense crusading, that he was trained by his mother to be a zealous champion of his faith against the *mlechchha* oppressors, is quite another misconceived belief. It is to confound political reality with the sectarian, to read a meaning in actions which they do not warrant.

Shivaji's early activity, the phase of maverick mobilisation which was the first step in the steep ladder he was to climb rapidly to the top, was both conceived and carried out in the context of the desolated Pune region, a victim of the unsettled, anarchical political situation and even more of the catastrophic famine of 1630-31. The desolation and pauperisation caused both by men and nature which led men to prey on men called urgently for a master : it was thus more in the humanitarian context than in the sectarian that young Shivaji was motivated. This he got from Dadaji Kondadeo; the idea of a benevolent ruler. Till 1647, when Dadaji died and Shivaji bided his time - in any case, he was too young in 1647, he was only seventeen years old-Shivaji learnt that men prey upon men and that those who have something more than ordinary men have the obligation to protect the preyed, not join the hunters.

The humanitarian impulse, clearly distinct from the sectarian, has to be seen as a continuing feature of Shivaji's polity. It was evident primarily in his domestic and administrative policies, directed towards the agrarian classes. It was also distinct from the statecraft by which the political necessities were dealt with. Ruthlessness was an unavoidable complement of the 'diplomacy' of the age, tempered faithlessness, its essential condition.

A great deal has been written on the so-called 'treachery and faithlessness' betrayed by Shivaji in his *coup* against not only Afzal Khan but against the Mores of Javli and others. It has been probably not realized that both war and politics in all ages have been essentially a moral, a reality which was well understood by both Chanakya and Machiavelli. Those who fought him would not have even his scruples in eliminating Shivaji and that too not with methods gentle or honest. Not they, but Shivaji was the weaker party and if he took pre-emptive measures, measures which were in keeping with the ethos of the age on this plane, it is hardly fitting for a later age to censure him—especially on a standard which is not conspicuous in observance in its own.

Apart from his policy within his own kingdom where he tried to make life and work easier for the poorer folk as far as he could, though of course, he was limited both in vision and means, so far as the standard and accepted institutions like the *watandari* were concerned, Shivaji also abstained from molesting them, the *haves* not people, in his raids outside. As Lenin the father of Russian revolutions, has said, you can not make omelettes without breaking eggs, bloodshed at junctures is unavoidable. Unnecessary violence was avoidable and Shivaji, as far as possible, abstained from it.

Economic Policies

Shivaji's economic policies can broadly be classified in two major categories : internal and external, the former

indigenous to Western Maharashtra and Konkan which formed his dominions and the other external to those regions where he and his forces operated not as conquerors but as raiders. The latter, the external policies, have come to be more noticed by historians, especially non-Maharashtrian ones and have attributed to Shivaji a rather unfavourable reputation as a spoliator.

There is not much point in attempting a justification of such acts. Shivaji himself is reported to have said that since the rulers of the Deccan Sultanates and the Mughals too compelled him to maintain a large army for defence of his realms, he had to make them pay for it. Certainly, this was so during his tenure, whenever he felt a scarcity of resources, he tried to meet the shortfall from raiding a prosperous outside urban centre. His raids on Surat, the Bombay of the seventeenth century, and the most prosperous of the Mughal ports, in 1664 and 1670 have been the most well-known, but he also raided a number of other such trading centres in Karnataka and Marathwada, for similar purposes. These raids were not always successful as for instance the one on Jalna in Marathwada, but in total, they yielded a rich harvest.

Likewise, the two taxes that he devised for external territories, the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, have come in for much criticism. These taxes were certainly not invented by him; tributes and exactions have been traditionally squeezed by the strong from the weak, over the ages. But Shivaji popularised them and raised them to a legitimate status and they certainly proved to be the bane of the Marathas, once they had expanded into wider areas. Whatever their technical justification, these taxes or rather legitimised squeeze implied power without responsibility, exactions without any corresponding obligations. The inbuilt potential for unpopularity which such exaction had, when carried to extreme length in the eighteenth century led to friction and antagonism between them and others like the Rajput rulers, not initially hostile to them. By that time, of

course, even the pretence of legitimacy had been dropped and as in Gujarat, in Rajasthan, military exactions were based on pure threat. By and large, in the age of Shivaji, such exactions were primarily used for maintaining the formidable military strength which Shivaji was building up both for defence and offence. It was thus a vital part of the public finance and hence the frequent recourse to such raids.

Land revenue formed the primary source for internal resources traditionally and was thus inamenable to alterations. There is absolutely no evidence to suppose that Shivaji tampered with the system in any way, that he curtailed land grants, jagirs drastically. Rather, as far as he could, he replaced hostile *watandars* by friendly ones, subject to his authority. Nevertheless, even when the personnel had changed the traditional offices like Patils, Kulkarnis, Deshpandes, Deshmukhs, Sardeshmukhs were continued with their traditional appurtenances. Even as 'The Chhatrapati,' Shivaji for instance, prided himself on being a *watandar*; a letter two years prior to his coronation speaks of an order to his officers to maintain a separate account of his personal income from his *watan* areas of Kol, Dabhol, Pune, Javeli etc.

Shivaji, however, helped the rural folk in several ways. He controlled the *watandars* and other minor figures in their oppression of the agriculturists. Despite his efforts to fight in lands other than his own, the incessant warfare of his age was sometimes carried into his own areas. In such cases, the peasant was helped in recoupment. The village officials were instructed to keep the cultivators contented and reduction in land revenue was given in appropriate circumstances. They were provided with advances to provide for capital inputs like bullocks, seeds and other equipment. The importance of irrigation was recognised though in a land like western Maharashtra, wells were the only sources of irrigation. Both well and canal construction were the responsibilities of the village folk. A document of 1789 does, however, suggest that

Shivaji interested in developing a garden in Shivapur, a locality named after himself, desired the people of that place to build a dam on the village stream and divert the water to the required place. An immense Stone barred the way and was later removed by Yas Patil, who was thereupon granted the Patilship of Kondhave village by Shivaji. Several, such instances of encouragement are to be found in documents.

There were a number of flourishing towns in the Konkan areas in the age of Shivaji; Chaul, Dabhol, Kalyan, Bhivandi, Pen and Vengurla find frequent references. To an extent, it is true that the continued disturbances in his age depressed trade and thus affected urban centres. But in his later period especially after his coronation, he took an active interest in encouraging trade, in promoting the welfare of these ports and other trading centres. He tried to maintain friendly relations with European merchant companies though it does appear that Maharashtra was too poor to absorb the costly wares in which these companies mostly dealt with. A number of traditional village crafts, essential for village life, were also encouraged, sometimes by assigning artisans pieces of lands for cultivation or by customary payments from the produce. More skilled craftsmen found opportunity for selling their goods in the *Kasba* markets. By and far, the traditional craft industry was organised on the caste system; the traditional returns, poor as they were deemed to be adequate. It does not appear that there was any noticeable improvement in this sector during Shivaji's age.

The returns thus available to the state from the internal resources were hardly adequate to meet the demands of internal administration, compelling, as mentioned earlier, Shivaji to take resources to external expropriation to maintain his military apparatus, the forts, the army and the navy.

Shivaji was on the whole a benign, paternalistic and benevolent ruler, especially for his own people. He avoided

needless bloodshed, attempted to secure his ends with the least cost. He conserved his resources, especially his manpower and even when on campaigns outside his territories, eschewed damaging the villages, or hurting the poor cultivators. His hammer fell hard on those who could bear it; there is no evidence that even in urban centres like Surat where his exactions were the harshest, he hurt the poor intentionally.

He was, however, unfailingly fair in his dealings with his soldiers, with his officials, with his people, never letting any consideration of caste or religion affect his judgement. By definition, he was a "*gobrahman pratipalak*" (protector of Cows and Brahmins). But his paternalistic umbrella was broad enough to embrace all his people, irrespective of caste, colour or creed.

Chapter Nine

Struggle For Supremacy

Of all the contestants for succession to the empire, the Marathas were the most favoured by circumstances. Nature had endowed them with a compact territory which was not easy of approach. The low range of the Western Ghats which runs spinelike between the plateau and the seacoast, the tablelands of Western Deccan and the littoral of Konkan form the homeland of the Marathas. The vast expanse of the Arabian sea washed the coastline. It showers embarrassing benefactions upon the land-torrential rains and inter-continental commerce. The Ghats offer retreats safe from the tramp of enemy horsemen. Their lonely mountain crags serve to perch the eerie castles which afford refuge from pursuit and vantage spots for dominating the plains around. The tableland is intersected by valleys through which rivers flow down to the East. The valleys contain rich soil, otherwise the land is fit only for millets and coarse *grains-bajra* and *Jowar*.

In this region of coast, hills and uplands, the Marathas led hard and frugal lives. Their surroundings bred independence in them and a spirit of adventure and sturdy self reliance. Great differences of wealth as in the North and the South did not

appear among them and the large class of peasant proprietors formed the backbone of their society. Caste distinctions existed as in other parts of India, but the jealousies of the three Brahmins groups, the strong position of the Marathas, and the popularity of the reform movement among the masses, mitigated the rigours of caste. A common language-Marathi-gave a cultural coherence to the people's aspirations, and a sentiment of unity.

Under the mild rule of the Ahmednagar and Bijapur Sultans, the Marathas had abundant opportunities to prosper and to rise in influence. A number of Maratha families built up small chieftains; many entered the service of the Sultans and some obtained offices of trust and responsibility. In the seventeenth century the rivalries of the successive Sultanates of the Deccan gave an impetus to the ambitions of the Maratha chiefs. The atmosphere was electrified by religious enthusiasm and destiny stood beckoning importunately.

At the right moment a great leader appeared among the people who possessed the highest qualities of a statesman and a soldier. Shivaji bound together in one political system the people who since the days of the Yadavas of Devagiri had known no organised polity of their own and who for more than three hundred and fifty years had remained subject to the Rulers of the dynasties hailing from the North. To create a State out of the scattered elements was a wonderful achievement. Not less marvellous was to give it an administrative machinery constructed upon sound principles.

Shivaji's genius shines through the accomplishment of a threefold task—the creation of a military force capable of overthrowing the yoke of the Deccan Sultans, the unification of the Marathas under the umbrella of one State, and the organisation of an enlightened and stable system of government. Finance had been the weak point of Indian governments, but Shivaji in the fixing of the emoluments of his officers, in the method of making payment and in all his undertakings was

extremely careful to avoid extravagance. Even his military expeditions were sustained by conquests. He set his face rigidly against the jagir system. His services were open to talent. Brahmans, Prabhus (Kayashtas) and Marathas all had an equal chance and even Muslims were admitted to high ranks.

About the ultimate aims of his policy it is held by some Maratha historians that Shivaji wanted to establish the *Hindu Pad Padshahi*, in place of Mughal empire. But throughout Maratha history *Swaraj* has been sharply distinguished from *Mulk giri* - the land of regular and settled Maratha rule from the lands lying outside *Swaraj*- "the happy hunting ground for his horsemen", and a legitimate source of Maratha levies. In this connection, Jadunath Sarkar observes, "The coincidence between Shivaji's foreign policy and that of a Muslim sovereign is so complete that both the history of Shivaji by his courtier Krishnaji Anant and the Persian official history of Bijapur use exactly the same word, *mulkgiri*, to describe such raids into neighbouring countries as a regular political ideal Shivaji (as well as the Peshwas after him) carried the *mulkgiri* into all neighbouring States, Hindus no less than Muslims and squeezed rich Hindus as mercilessly as he did Muhammedans."

Shivaji had risen on the crest of a religious wave, but there was no chauvinism in this movement. Tukaram and other Maratha saints were not narrow minded bigots and their religion of *Bhakti* was not exclusive. In fact, they wanted to bring the followers of Hinduism and Islam together. In Hinduism they disapproved of idol worship, superstition, caste, pilgrimages, etc., and similarly they denounced the spirit of Muslim intolerance. Shivaji regarded these Saints and Sufis as his teachers. He, therefore, followed a policy of live and let live. He showed respect for the Muslim saints, for the holy Book of Islam and for the mosques. There is no record of his interfering with the celebration of Islamic rites and ceremonies, or treating Muslims on a different level from the Hindus.

But Shivaji was champion of religious freedom. He warned Aurangzeb against the imposition of Jaziya and he fought Aurangzeb because he could not accept the pretensions of the political superiority of Muslims or the status of inferiority of non-Muslims. Toleration, justice and equality were the maxims of his policy in his own Kingdom, and he desired their adoption in the Mughal empire.

Shivaji died comparatively young. He was only 53 years old at the time of his death. this was a calamity, for the young State had hardly had time to send its roots down into the soil. It was not able to develop any peaceful method of transfer of authority. It was regarded more as an appendage of the king than a commonwealth or a republic. This institutional immaturity became manifest before Shivaji had closed his eyes. His last years were embittered by the controversy about the heritage of his domain. Sambhaji, the eldest son, revolted against his father and deserted to the Mughals. The cabinet was disunited, the two powerful ministers-the Peshwa and the Sachiv - "were openly at loggerheads with each other".

When ultimately Sambhaji became reconciled to his father and ascended the throne, he wreaked vengeance upon the ministers and officials suspected of hostility towards him. He put to death Soyarabai, his stepmother, Annaji Datto, the Sachiv, and a number of others. A vendetta was started against Brahman Ministers. "His cruelty, violence and debauchery made some of his leading Brahmans conceive the design of destroying him", with the result that he was betrayed, captured by a Mughal commandant and beheaded by Aurangzeb's order, nine years after his father's death.

Then followed twenty years of heroic struggle between the Marathas and the forces of Aurangzeb. The dare-devilry of Maratha captains and their brilliant tactics wore the Emperor out. He retired to Aurangabad to die a sadly disappointed man. The Marathas had won the war, but at a terrible price.

The effect of the struggle was to give an impetus to centrifugal forces. The unity which Shivaji had imposed upon the Maratha chiefs and people through the establishment of a unitary state was lost. The Maratha Sardars who had to carry on a guerilla war against the Mughals became so used to relying upon their own judgement and will that on the termination of the struggle they could not get out of their habit of independent action. As time passed, their loyalty to the central authority became weaker, and finally they set themselves up as autonomous - rulers of their territories. They considered themselves as the peers of the Peshwa, and they were reluctant to show deference to his orders. They were even prepared to defy him in case they disapproved of his decisions.

A worse consequence was the evaporation of the moral fervour which Shivaji had inspired in them the championship of 'Maharashtra Dharma'. The enthusiasm which had led them to defy the might of the Mughal empire for more than twenty years was replaced by greed for land and money. After spending nearly half a century in the pursuit of a vision of righteousness and freedom, the Maratha Rulers had become poor imitators of Mughal ways and manners. The war corrupted their morals and destroyed their idealism. They began to yearn for the luxury, pomp and show of the imperial Court of Delhi. Their native virtues-frugality, simplicity and devotion to duty were slowly undermined. The joy of living and dying for a great cause gave place to egotism and self-aggrandisement.

Unhealthy political tendencies which had been kept in check by Shivaji made their appearance. Disputes regarding succession to the throne of the king as well as to the *gaddi* of the Peshwa became the bane of Maratha politics. Sambhaji had been opposed by his half-brother Raja Ram. The restoration of Sahu was resisted by Tarabai, widow of Raja Ram. Succession to Shahu who had no son led to conflict between the chief officials. When the Raja became powerless and the Peshwa

usurped his authority, contentions arose at the death of the Peshwa.

The Peshwa's rise to power created internal jealousies. the Rajas on the one side and the Maratha Sardars on the other disliked the eclipse of their importance, and tripartite intrigues continued to bedevil the affairs of the State. When Raghujii Bhosle raided Bengal, the Nawab Aliwardi Khan obtained the support of the Peshwa against Bhonsle and routed him (1743). The fifth Peshwa Narayan Rao was done to death by violence instigated by Raghunath Rao (1773). When Mahadji Sindhia visited Pune after twelve years campaigns in the North, there was a terrific alarm at pune and the Pune politicians headed by Nana Phadnavis, who hated Sindhia, were so frightened that they requested Cornwallis for a loan of the Bombay regiment returning from Mysore (1792). For a whole year the two parties kept manoeuvring against each other, Nana intriguing with Holkar, and others to bring about Sindhia's fall. At last an open rupture took place between Sindhia and Holkar, and Holkar was decisively defeated at Lakheri (1793). Mahadji's successor, Daulat Rao, went to the length of taking Nana prisoner by treachery at the instance of Baji Rao and proceeded to plunder Pune - the seat of the Central Government (1798). The quarrels of Nana, Holkar and Sindhia shook the foundation of the State. The blind folly of Raghunath Rao and Baji Rao II introduced the Trojan horse in the shape of the British East India Company into the citadel of Maratha affairs. Wars ensued. The Maratha Sardars and ministers were engaged in suicidal internecine conflicts. Naturally the British profited by them and by 1802 forced the Peshwa to sign away Maratha independence. The other Sardars were soon rounded up and liquidated and by 1818 the dream of Maratha sovereignty had melted into thin air.

The administrative changes forced by the struggle against Aurangzeb had shaped the strength of the solid structure built up by Shivaji, the founder of the State. For example, the

jagirdari system was re-established. Regular revenue collection was not possible and the only way to remunerate the officials was by the assignment of land revenue (*sarajams*). During the wars against Aurangzeb, the army was swollen beyond all proportion. To meet its expenses a policy of horse exactions from the neighbouring territories was adopted. Every year for eight months expeditions were led North and South, East and West for the collection of loot. But the greater part of it was appropriated by the intransigent commanders themselves, and little of plunder or of revenue reached the treasury at Pune. The Peshwas were always in debt and always importunate for money.

Baji Rao I (1720-40) was a warlike Peshwa and a great soldier. He led expeditions into Karnatak against the Nizam and in the North. But although they brought him fame and extension of territory, he was involved in debt. "His troops were in arrears, the *Soucars* (bankers), refused to make any further advances, and he complained bitterly of the constant mutinies and clamours in his camp, which occasioned him much vexation and distress."¹ The Peshwa wrote, "I have fallen into that hell of being beset by creditors, and to pacify *Soucars* and *Sillidars*. I am falling at their feet, till I have rubbed the skin from my forehead."²

Balaji Rao, the successor of Baji Rao I contracted between 1740 and 1760 a total debt of one crore and fifty lakhs of rupees, on which he had to pay from twelve to eighteen percent interest. Although in 1751-52 he released a revenue of thirty-six and a half million rupees - the highest collection made - the State was much in debt at the accession of his successor Madhav Rao. Balaji in a letter to his friend Nana Purandare reveals the state of his finances. He complains that although a river of gold was flowing into Maharashtra from the North, and another from the south, "It goes on increasing our thirst all the more." For "when it (the river of gold) courses through the arid regions of Pune, I feel it will disappear before

reaching home." The battle of Panipat caused heavy losses to the exchequer. Madhav Rao tried to husband the resources with great care, "yet the treasury was exhausted." Nana Phadnavis was extremely close fisted and although he built up a large fortune for himself, he starved the army, so much so, that "when his dead body was being removed for funeral rites, the Arab guards on duty created a row demanding their arrears of pay".

After Madhav Rao (1761-72), the government of the Peshwa was overshadowed by the power of the Sindhias. But the Sindhias showed the same improvidence in administering their finances as the Peshwas. They raised large armies, interfered in the affairs of the Mughal empire and entered into the intrigues of the nobility, hiring themselves out to any one who promised to satisfy their demands. The promises were light-heartedly made, but their realisation always required military expeditions. All the tributes and subsidies thus collected were consumed and the administration lived from hand to mouth.

This is borne out by Mahadji Sindhia's agent writing to Nana Phadnavis in 1785 that "all the receipts (from the provinces under his control) were being spent on the infantry and artillery and that the Maratha part of the army, the cavalry, was starving and abandoning the army in large numbers. Huge loans from bankers had been incurred. Practically all sahumkars - Maratha, Gujarati, and Rangdas had been tapped".³ Again, after the battle of Lalsot (1787), Sindhia pressed Nana for aid. Said he, "I am helpless for want of treasure. Nana should spare at least ten lakhs for me. As my resources are exhausted, I can not stay in Hindustan (north India) any longer".

In 1793 Cornwallis reported : "His (Mahadji Sindhia's) revenues have so rapidly declined in his absence (from the North), that they are becoming greatly inadequate to the maintenance of his army : and to make certain provision

for the payment of the corps under M. De Boigne, he has been obliged to transfer that officer in Jaidad, a district estimated at twenty seven lacs of rupees yearly collection, a measure of such dangerous tendency to his authority and security, that nothing but the total want of other resources could have compelled him to adopt it".

Mahadji Sindhia was so much impressed by the superiority of European-trained troops in battle that he resolved to raise an army on the European model. He employed a number of French Officers to recruit troops and give them training. But these troops were expensive and Mahadji was only able to pay their salaries regularly by keeping his other troops starving. The loyalty of the foreign conditieri was never certain and ultimately they proved traitors. The Indian Officers could not take their place for lack of training and the expenses could not be met because the finances were in disorder.

The foreign policy of the Maratha was erroneous. It laid upon the government burdens which it could not carry. The *mulkgiri* of Shivaji's period had some semblance of propriety, because it could be interpreted as a reaction against oppression and bigotry. It had a justification as long as the struggle for existence lasted against Aurangzeb. But under the Peshwas, it assumed the form of naked aggressions. In their incursions they made no distinction between friend and foe. They exacted tribute from all and sundry, sparing neither their co-religionists nor the Hindustani party among the Mughal nobility which sought a close alliance with the Rajputs and Jats. Thus by their levies and spoliations they antagonised the Rajputs, the Jats and the Bundelas, and their atrocities created terror in Bengal and the Gangetic valley. The Maratha system outside its own domain was purely predatory.

Even the territories which they conquered were not treated with statesman-like wisdom. The cultivators were oppressed, and harsh measures were adopted to extract

money from them. "Other Hindu states took pride in improving the condition of the territory they conquered. They constructed temples, wells, canals, roads and other public works. The Marathas did nothing of the kind. Their *mulkgiri* raids, by destroying the industries and wealth of the country overrun, merely killed the goose which laid the golden egg".⁴ Rajwade confesses :

"The Peshwa failed to win the minds of men in the conquered territories. No institutions were set up to explain to the conquered people Maratha ideals to rally their support to the Maratha cause. To the Kanarese, the Andhras, the Gujaratis, the Sikhs, the Bundelas, the Purbias and the Rangads in the new conquests their Maratha rulers remained strangers and could never count on their support when threatened by an outside enemy. In the campaign of Panipat, the Marathas realised the truth of the old adage that one could do anything with the bayonets except sit on them".

II

The hundred years that followed the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 saw a complicated and many sided struggle for mastery over India. The Mughal Empire rapidly fell to pieces and the imperial Viceroys and Governors began to function as semi-independent Rulers, though so great was the prestige of the descendent of the Mughal in Delhi that a formal allegiance was paid to him even when he was powerless and a prisoner of others. These *satrapies* had no real power or importance, except in so far as they helped or hindered the main protagonists for power. The Nizam of Hyderabad, by virtue of the strategic position of his State in the South, appeared to have a certain importance in the beginning. But it soon transpired that this importance was entirely fictitious and the State was 'straw-stuffed and held upright' by the external forces. It showed a peculiar capacity for duplicity and for profiting by the misfortunes

of others while avoiding all risk and danger. Sir John Shore described it as 'incurably depraved, devoid of energy consequently liable to sink into vassalage.' The Marathas looked upon the Nizam as one of their subordinate chieftains paying tribute to them. An attempt by him to avoid this and to show independence met with swift retribution and the Marathas put to flight his feeble and none-too-brave army. He took to refuge under the protecting wings of the growing power of the British East India Company and survived as a State because of this vassalage. Indeed the Hyderabad State enlarged its area considerably, without any remarkable efforts on its part, by the British victory over Tipu Sultan of Mysore.

Warren Hastings, writing in 1784, refers to the Nizam of Hyderabad :

"His dominions are of small extent and scanty revenue; his military strength is represented to be most contemptible; nor was he at any period of his life distinguished for personal courage or the spirit of enterprise. On the contrary, it seems to have been his constant and ruling maxim to foment the incentives of war among his neighbours, to profit by their weakness and embarrassments, but to avoid being a party himself in any of their contests, and to submit even to humiliating sacrifices rather than subject himself to the chances of war."

The real protagonists for power in India during the eighteenth century were four: two of these were Indian and two foreign. the Indians were the Marathas and Haider Ali and his son Tipu Sultan in the South : the foreigners were the British and the French. Of these, it appeared almost inevitable, during the first half of the century, that the Marathas were destined to establish their supremacy over India as a whole and to be the successors of the Mughal Empire. Their troops appeared at the very gates of Delhi as early as 1737 and there was no power strong enough to oppose them.

Just then (in 1739) a new eruption took place in the North-West and Nadir Shah of Persia swept down to Delhi, killing and plundering, and carrying off enormous treasures including the famous Peacock Throne. It was an easy raid for him for the Delhi Rulers were effete and effeminate, wholly unused to warfare, and Nadir Shah did not come into conflict with the Marathas. In a sense, his raid facilitated matters for the Marathas, who in subsequent years spread to the Punjab. Again Maratha supremacy of India was in sight.

Nadir Shah's raid had two consequences. he put an end completely to any pretensions that in Delhi Mughal rulers held power and dominion; henceforth they became vague shadows enjoying a ghostly sovereignty, puppets in the hands of any one who was strong enough to make them yield. To a large extent they had arrived at that stage even before Nadir Shah came; he completed the process. And yet, so strong is the hold of tradition and long established custom that the British East India Company, as well as others, continued to send humble presents to them in token of tribute right upto the eve of Plassey; : and even afterwards for a long time the company considered itself and functioned as the agent of the Delhi Emperor 'in whose name money was coined till 1835'.

The second consequence of Nadir Shah's raid was the separation of Afghanistan from India. Afghanistan, which for long ages past had been part of India, was now cut off and became part of Nadir Shah's dominion. Sometime afterwards a local rebellion resulted in the murder of Nadir Shah by a group of his own officers and Afghanistan became an independent State.

The Marathas had in no way been weakened by Nadir Shah and they continued to spread in the Punjab. But in 1761 they met with a crushing defeat at Panipat from an Afghan invader, Ahmed Shah Durrani, who was ruling Afghanistan then. The cream of the Maratha forces perished in this disaster

and, for a while, their dreams of an empire faded away. They recovered gradually and the Maratha dominions were divided into a number of independent States joined together in a confederacy under the leadership of the Peshwa at Pune. The chiefs of the bigger States were Sindhia of Gwalior, Holkar of Indore and the Gaekwad of Baroda. This confederacy was still dominating a vast area in Western and Central India. But the Panipat defeat of the Marathas by Ahmad Shah had weakened them just when the English Company was emerging as an important territorial power in India.

In Bengal, Robert Clive, by promoting treason and forgery, with very little fighting, had won the Battle of Plassey; in 1757, a date which is sometimes said to mark the beginning of the British Empire in India. It was an unsavoury beginning and something of that bitter taste has clung to it ever since. Soon, the British held the whole of Bengal and Bihar and one of the early consequences of their rule was a terrible famine which ravaged these two provinces in 1770, killing over a third of the population of their rich, vast and densely populated area.

In South India, the struggle between the English and the French, a part of the world struggle between the two, ended in the triumph of the English, and the French were almost eliminated from India.

With the limitation of the French power from India, three contestants for supremacy remained—the maratha confederacy, Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, and the British. In spite of their victory at Plassey; and their spreading out over Bengal and Bihar, a few, if any, people in India then looked upon the British as a dominant power, destined to rule over the whole of India. An observer would still have given the first place to the Marathas who sprawled all over Western and Central India right upto Delhi and whose courage and fighting qualities were wellknown. Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan were formidable adversaries who inflicted a severe defeat on the British and

came near to breaking the power of the East India Company. But they were confined to the South and did not directly affect the fortunes of India as a whole.

Haider Ali was a remarkable man and one of the notable figures in Indian history. He had some kind of a national ideal and possessed the qualities of a leader with a vision. Continually suffering from a painful disease, his self-discipline and capacity for hard work were astonishing. He realised, long before others did so, the importance of sea power and the growing menace of the British based on naval strength. He tried to organise a joint effort to drive them out and, for this purpose, sent envoys to the Maldiv Islands, made them his headquarters for shipbuilding and naval activities. He died by the wayside as he was marching with his army. His son Tipu continued strengthening his navy. Tipu also sent messages to Napoleon and to the Sultan in Constantinople.

In the North, a Sikh State under Ranjit Singh was growing up in the Punjab, to spread later to Kashmir and the North - West Frontier Province. But that too was a marginal State not affecting the real struggle for supremacy. That Struggle, it became clear as the eighteenth century approached its end, lay between the only two powers that counted the Marathas and the British. All the other States and principalities were subordinate and subsidiary to these two.

Tipu Sultan of Mysore was finally defeated by the British in 1799 and that left the field clear for the final contest between the Marathas and the British East India Company. Charles Metcalfe, one of the ablest of the British officials in India, wrote in 1806 :

"India contains no more than two great powers, British and Maratha, and every other State acknowledges the influence of one or the other. Every inch that we recede will be occupied by them."

But there was rivalry amongst the Maratha chieftains and they fought and were defeated separately by the British. They won some notable victories and especially inflicted a severe defeat on the British near Agra in 1804. But by 1818 the Maratha power was finally crushed and the great chiefs that represented it in Central India submitted and accepted the overlordship of the East India Company. The British became then the unchallenged sovereigns of a great part of India, governing the country directly or through puppet and subsidiary princes. The Punjab and some outlying parts were still beyond their control but the British Empire in India had become an established fact and subsequent wars with the Sikhs, the Gurkhas and in Burma merely rounded it off on the map.

References :

1. Grant Duff; HISTORY OF THE MARATHAS (1921) Vol. 1, p. 390.
2. Ibid - Footnote.
3. HISTORICAL PAPERS RELATING TO MAHADJI SCINDIA (1937) pp. 887-89.
4. CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF INDIA, Vol. IV (Indian Edition).
5. RAJWADE'S WRITINGS (Sahitya Academy, Ed. of 1958), pp. 189-90.
6. The term used was MUGHAL DARBAR KE FIDVI-E-KHAS (Special servants of the Mughal Court).

Appendix 1

Generals and Aides of Shivaji

The new generation of young men, belonging to the high families, entered Shivaji's service and became his most trusted supporters. Prataprao Gujar, Hambirrao Mohite, Shidoji Nimbalkar, Sambaji More, Suryarao Kakade, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav, Khanderao Dabhade, Parsoji and Rupaji Bhonsle and Nemaji Shinde are all names which figured in the later History of Shivaji's life, and they soon succeeded in securing to the movement the support, not only of the middle and lower classes, but of the best and most aristocratic families in the country. This is a point of some importance to note, for it shows clearly that the movement was initiated by the people and by their natural leaders, who only joined it when the success became assured.

The Muslims also felt the influence that was at work. Shivaji's chief admiral, Darya Surung, was a Muslim who fought with the Siddi admirals of the Mughals, so was Ibrahim Khan, a pathan leader, was a devoted general of Shivaji. The disbanded muslim soldiers and troopers from Bijapur and Golconda entered Shivaji's service and fought with valour the battles for Shivaji.

The relative importance of the Brahman and the Prabhu elements on one side, and the Mavli and Maratha element on the other, will be fully realised from the fact, that in Grant Duff's history the names of the twenty Brahman leaders and four Prabhus are mentioned as against twenty Mavli and Maratha leaders. These Mavlis and Marathas were opposed to about fourteen Maratha partisan leaders in the Bijapur and Mughal service. All the Brahman Ministers, except the *Panditrao* and the *Nyayadhis* had in those days of trouble to be military commanders as well as civil officers, and they discharged this double function with the equal credit. The Native *Bakhars* make mention of twice as many names, but the relative proportions shown above are not much disturbed. There are about fifty Brahman and Prabhu leaders mentioned as against forty Mavli and Maratha leaders in the narrative of the Chitnis's great *Bakhar*, though in the final list given at the end of the work forty-five Brahman and seventy-five Mavli and Maratha names are mentioned. Roughly speaking about a hundred men from all classes of society thus came to prominence, and were the main supporters of the new dynasty at Raigad. We can only select a few of these men whose deeds have been sung by national bards, or chronicled in the records of the time, but they will be typical of the rest who, in their own humbler places, performed feats of valour and devotion, which contributed equally to the success of the common cause.

Among the Brahman leaders, the Hanmantes, both father and sons, naturally occupied the first place. Naropant Hanmante was like Dadaji Konddev in Shahji's service, having charge of his Karnatik possessions. His Son, Raghunath Narayan and Janardanapant, were worthy of their father. Raghunathpant helped to carve out for Shahji's other son Vyankoji a new kingdom at Tanjaur, and when differences arose between him and his master, Raghunath pant retired to the fortress of Gingi, and held that station as also a portion of Arcot, and Vellore and several strong posts in Mysore, till

Shivaji at his request, made his final expedition into the Karnatik country. The importance of these possessions in the South was fully realised when Aurangzeb captured Sambhaji, and conquered the hill forts one by one, and the Maratha leaders had to retreat to the South at Gingi, whence they returned in a few years back to their country, and forced Aurangzeb in his turn to admit his discomfiture. Raghunathpant's brother Janardanpant served under Shivaji in the later wars. Such were these Hanmantes, men of iron courage, and at the same time great in the wisdom of their counsels.

Moropant Pingle may well be described as the chief pillar of Shivaji's power, and earned his Peshwaship by distinguished services in extending the conquests in the Northern Konkan and Baglan. He was a great builder of forts. Moropant returned home when still a youth and joined Shivaji's army in 1653. The first Peshwa, Shamarajpant, failed to achieve success in the wars in the Konkan with the Siddis and the Savants, and Moropant was sent by his master to retrieve the loss, and succeeded in his mission. He was constantly engaged in all the wars of those times, and outlived his master only a short time. The Peshwaship survived in his family till Shahu bestowed it upon Balaji Vishwanath in 1714. He was Shivaji's chief civil advisor, as also his principal military commander, and there was no man at the time who could be mentioned as more capable and more devoted to the national interest.

Abaji Sondev was trained in the same school with the Hanmantes and the Pingles. He was the first to go outside the Jagir limits, and take the offensive by attacking Kalyan which, though retaken several times by the Mughals, continued to be an advanced Maratha outpost in Abaji Sondev's charge, as *Subedar* in the Konkan. He was also, like Moropant, a great builder of forts. When Shivaji went to Delhi, Abaji and Moropant were left in charge of the kingdom as advisors of Jijabai. He was first appointed *Mazumdar* and his son was appointed *Amatya* at the time of the coronation.

Ragho Ballal Atre distinguished himself in the wars with the Siddis. He took prominent part in the suppression of Chandrarao More, and it was his chief distinction that the Pathan soldiers employed by Shivaji were placed under his command.

Annaji Datto was another Brahman leader who rose to be *Surnis* and *Pantasachiv* in Shivaji's time. He took an active part in the conquest of Panhala and Rangana, and in the Konkan wars, and led the first expedition in the Karnatik, when he plundered Hubli. He had the charge of South Konkan just as Abaji Sondev and Moropant had the charge of North Konkan and Baglan. He was associated with these commanders in the charge of the Maratha territory, when Shivaji went to Delhi.

Dattaji Gopinath was *Waknis* and *Mantri* in charge of Shivaji's household affairs, And served Shivaji in the important missions. The famous Sakharam Bapu Bokil, of later Maratha history, was descended from this family.

Raoji Somnath was in charge of the Berar conquests, and served in the Konkan wars also. His father Somnath was *Dabir* and foreign minister, and was succeeded by Janardanpant Hanmante in those posts.

Niraji Raoji was *Nyayadhis* and his son Prahlad was ambassador at Golconda and in Rajaram's time became *Pratinidhi* in consequence of his great talents in organising the defence of Gingi.

Among the Prabhu Commanders and Councillors, the principal names are Murar Baji, Baji Prabhu, and Balaji Avji.

Murar Baji was in charge of Purandar fort, and defended it against the attacks of Diler Khan with great heroism and at the cost of his life.

Baji Prabhu, from being an enemy, was converted into a

devoted follower. When Shivaji escaped from Panhala and went to Rangana, he posted himself with a thousand men in a narrow defile, where he contested every inch of ground with the Bijapur general, in command of overwhelming forces, till he heard the gun announcing Shivaji's safe arrival at Rangana, when at last he gave up breath, exhausted from the effects of the wounds he had received. This exploit and sacrifice have been compared with the heroic defence of the Pass at Thermopylae, so well known to the readers of Greek history.

Balaji Avji was descended from a noble family in the Habshi's service, and like Balaji Vishvanath later on was forced to leave his native village to save his life. He attracted Shivaji's notice in the 1648 by his cleverness, and continued to be the chief secretary throughout Shivaji's life. His son and grandson also played an important part in the two succeeding reigns, and one of his descendants wrote the great chronicle, known as the Chitnis's *Bakhar*.

Among the Mavli Commanders, Yesaji Kank was the chief of the Mavli infantry, and did important service in the earlier conquests. He and Tanaji continued to be Shivaji's chief associates all through their life. They were both with him when Afzulkhan was killed, as also when Shaistakhan was assaulted in his own palace, and they both accompanied Shivaji to Delhi.

Tanaji Malusare and his brother Suryaji are names immortalised by native bards for the courage they showed in escalading Sinhagad, where Tanaji met his death, and Suryaji took his revenge upon the garrison.

Baji Fasalkar Deshmukh met his death in a combat with the Savants in the Konkan wars. Firangoji Narasale was the commander of the Chakan fort, and made it over to Shivaji in 1648. He was one of those who, though once an enemy, became a trusted friend, and when the Mughal reconquered Chakan, and tempted him by an offer of service, he refused the temptation and joined Shivaji's army.

Sambaji Kawji with Raghunathpant took part in the attack on Javli when Chandrao More was killed. While Yesaji Kanak was the commander of the Malvi infantry, Netaji Palkar was the commander of the cavalry. He was the most dashing officer in the army, and extended Shivaji's expeditions to the east.¹

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Chronology

1627, Sep. 12	Muhammad Adilshah succeeds at Bijapur.
1628, Feb. 4	Shah Jahan crowned Mughal emperor.
1630, Feb. 6	Birth of Shivaji at Shivneri Fort.
1636 Oct.	Shahji Bhonsle enters Adilshahi service.
1637, Feb. 25	Adil Shah confirms Pune jagir to Shahji.
1638,	Shivaji and his mother Jijabai brought to Pune. Dadaji Konddeo appointed Shahji's agent for Pune Jagir.
1642,	Shivaji married to Saibai Nimbalkar; assigned Pune Jagir.
1644,	Captured Singhgarh.
1646	Muhammad Adilshah falls seriously ill.
1647, Mar. 7	Dadaji Konddeo dies; Shivaji captures Torna and fortifies Rajgad.
1648, Jul. 28	Shahji arrested.
Oct. -Dec..	Shivaji's battle with Bijapur forces near Purandar.
1654, Oct.	Shivaji seizes Purandar fort.
1656, Jan. 15	Captures Javeli
May	Captures Raigad fort.
sep. 24	Gains Supa.
	Captures Rohida fort.
1656, Nov. 4	Muhammad Adilshah dies; Ali Adilshah (II) succeeds at Bijapur.

1657, Jan. 10	Shivaji marries Sakwarbai Gaikwad (3rd. wife).
Apr. 8	Marries Kashibai Jadhav.
15	Marries Putlibai Mohite.
May, 14	Sambhaji eldest son of Shivaji born of Saibai; loots Junnar.
Jun.	Fight with the Mughals.
Aug.	Aurangzeb's treaty with Bijapur.
Oct. 24	Shivaji captures Kalyan and Bhiwandi.
1658, Jan. 8	Shivaji captures Mahuli.
1658, Aug. 30	Shivaji sends Sonaji as envoy to Delhi.
1659, Apr.	Adilshah orders Maval Deshmukhs to join Afzal Khan.
1659, Jul. 11	Shivaji goes to Javali.
1659, Sep. 5	Saibai dies.
1659, Nov. 10	Afzal Khan killed at Pratapgad.
1659, Nov. 28	Shivaji gains Panhala fort.
1660, May 2	Shaista Khan enters Pune.
Jul, 13	Shivaji escapes from Panhala.
Aug., 15	Shaista Khan captures Chakan.
1661, Feb. 3	Shivaji defeats Kartalab Khan at Unbarkhind.
Mar. -Apr.,	Captures Rajapur and Shringarpur.
1662,	Shivaji defeats Namdar Khan at Mirya Dongar, Pen.
1663, April, 5	Night raid on Shaista Khan at Pune.
May	Shivaji captures Kudal (South Konkan).
1664, Jan. 6-10	First sack of Surat.
Jan., 23	Death of Shahji.
Nov., 15	Construction of sea-fort of Sindhudurg started.
1665, Feb.	Basrur raided
Mar. 3	Jai Singh reaches Pune.
Mar. 30	Purandar besieged.
Jun. 12-13	Shivaji meets Jai Singh at Purandar and concludes treaty.

Sep. 27	Shivaji receives Mughal "Farman" at Purandar.
Nav. 20	Jai Singh and Shivaji start an invasion of Bijapur.
1666, Mar. 5	Leaves Raigad for Agra.
May, 12	Shivaji's audience with Aurangzeb.
Dec. 11	Returns to Raigad.
1667, Apr. 6	Shivaji writes to Aurangzeb offering submission.
Oct. 8	Peace with Adil Shah.
Nov.	Shivaji raids Bardes.
1668, Aug. 5	Maratha contingent goes to Aurangabad to serve the Mughals.
1669, May-Oct.	Shivaji renews attack on Janjira.
1670, Feb. 24	Birth of Rajaram to Soyrabai.
Mar. 8	Purandar recaptured.
May 13	Lohagad taken.
Jun 16	Mahuli recaptured.
Jun 24	Rohida taken.
Oct. 3-5	Second sack of Surat.
Oct. 17	Battle of Vani Dindori.
Dec.	Shivaji sacks Karanja.
1671, Jan.	Salher captured.
1672, Feb.	Salher retained.
Jun. Jul.	Jawahar and Ramnagar captured.
Nov. 24	Ali Adilshah dies and Sikandar Adilshah succeeds.
1673, Mar.	Prataprao Gujar defeats Bahlol Khan.
Apr.	Parali captured.
Jul. 27	Satara gained.
Dec.	Shivaji returns from Kanara campaign.
1674, Feb. 24	Prataprao killed in Nasari Battle.
May, 29	Shivaji's sacred thread ceremony.
May 30	Remarriage according to Vedic rites.
Jun. 6	Coronation; commencement of "Rajyabhishek" era..

Jun. 17	Jijabai passes away.
Sep. 24	"Tantrik coronation"
Dec.	Shivaji raids Baglan and Khandesh.
1675, Apr. 17	Phonda captured.
May.	Kanara coast gained.
1676, Jan.	Shivaji's illness.
1677, Feb.	Shivaji in Hyderabad.
Mar.	Shivaji in Shri Shaila.
May.	Jinji sold to Shivaji.
Jul.	Vyankoji flees away from Shivaji's camp.
Aug.	Shivaji at Vridhachalam.
1678, Feb.	Reduction of Belvadi.
Apr. 2	Aurangzeb reimposes "jaziya" on Hindus.
	Shivaji returns to Panhala from southern expedition.
Dec. 13	Sambhaji deserts to the Mughals.
1679, Mar. 3	Koppal captured.
Sep.	Khanderi island fortified.
Nov.	Sambhaji returns from the Mughals.
	Dharangaon sacked.
Nov. 1	Sack of Jalna.
1680, Jan 13	Shivaji meets Sambhaji at Panhala.
Jan. 23	Shivaji taken ill.
Apr. 3	Death of Shivaji.

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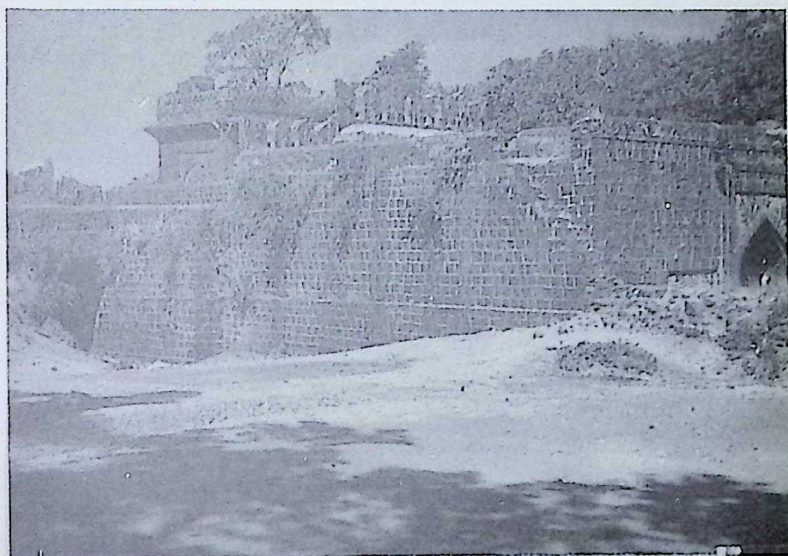
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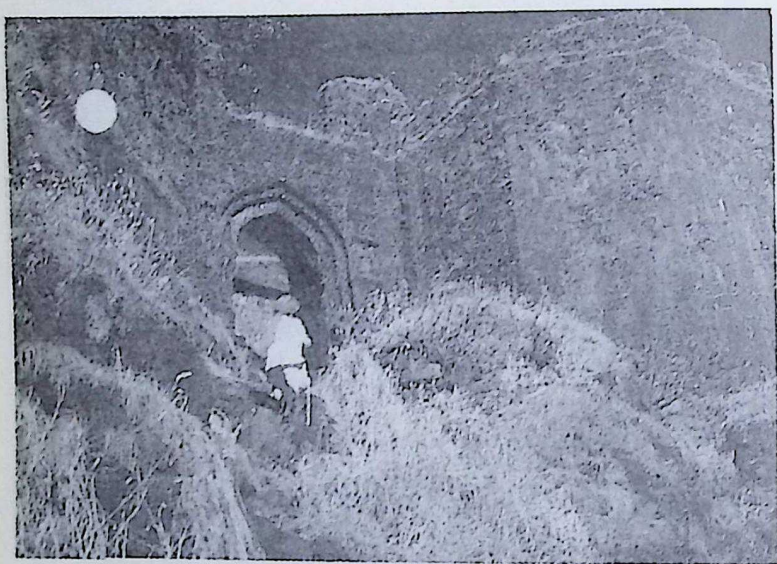
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Three Gates of Panhalafort



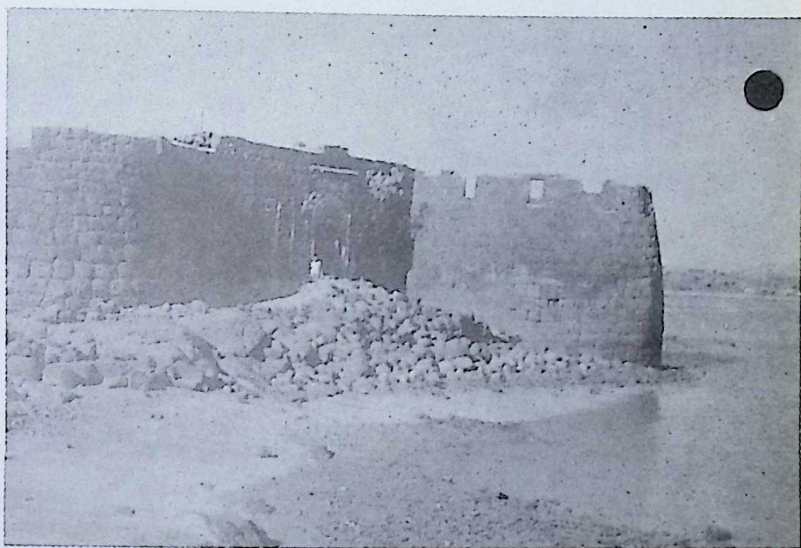
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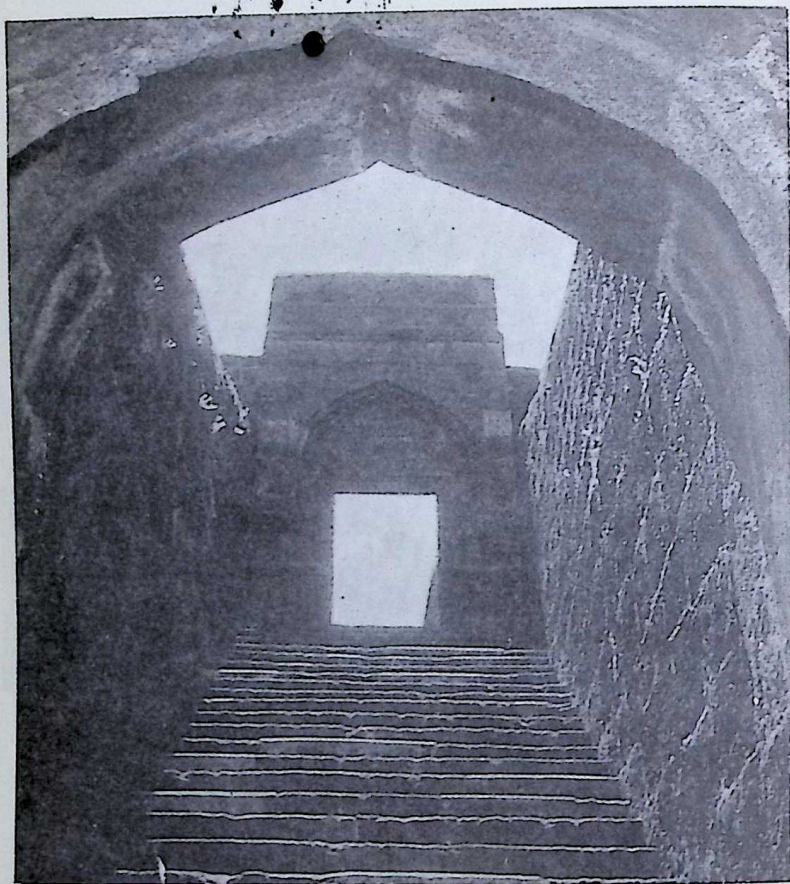
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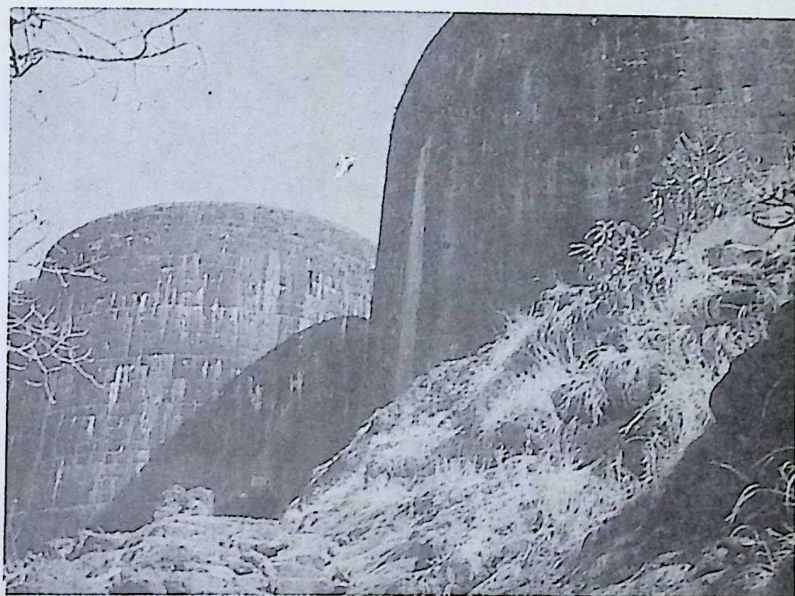


Fort of Colaba



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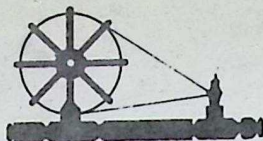


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Dr. B.N. Pande, was born on December 23, 1905. His grand father Pandit Raj Mangal Raghunath Pande fought against the British and was sentenced to death at Kanpur in the year 1859. Father Pandit Ramadhar took prominent part in Swadeshi Movement in 1906. Dr. B.N. Pande himself joined the freedom struggle in 1920 and took part in all the Satyagraha Movements led by Mahatma Gandhi. He had early education at Govt. School Chhindwara and at Vishwa Bharati, Santiniketan and Theosophical Institute, Madras. He carried on his studies in various prisons, where he was undergoing imprisonment. He was a member of Court and Executive Council of Allahabad University, Member of Courts of Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Aligarh Muslim University. He was chancellor of five universities in the state of Orissa. He was Mayor of Allahabad city in 1960-61. He was elected to U.P. Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad, and was a member of Rajya Sabha nominated (twice) and elected (once). He was appointed Governor of Orissa in 1983 for a term of five years. Author of over 30 books on history, culture, philosophy and religion. Recipient of Padma Shri Award in 1976, Khuda Bakhsh Award for communal harmony in 1993. He was also awarded Ph.D. from Soka University, Tokyo. Dr. Pande is vice-chairman of Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti since 1980.



GANDHI SMRITI AND DARSHAN SAMITI

Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti (GSDS) was formed in 1984 by the merger of Gandhi Darshan at Rajghat and Gandhi Smriti at 5, Tees January Marg. The basic aim and objective of the Samiti is to propagate the life, mission and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi through organising various socio-educational and cultural programmes.

Gandhi Smriti

Gandhi Smriti at 5, Tees January Marg, New Delhi is now a national memorial where the epic life of the Father of the Nation ended on Friday, January 30, 1948. The hallowed house treasures many memories of the last 144 days of his life. The exhibition on the Mahatma, the room he lived in and the prayer ground where he fell a martyr with god's name on his lips attract a large number of visitors every day. The atmosphere reverberates with the *bhajan* he liked most, *Easwar, Allah, tere naam'*

Gandhi Darshan

Situated close to the Gandhi Samadhi at Rajghat, on a 36-acre land, Gandhi Darshan offers (1) a comprehensive exhibition on Gandhi spread out in four pavilions, (2) Films Auditorium, (3) Conference hall, (4) Camping facilities for major national and international camps, (5) Children's corner, (6) Library and (7) Photo Unit which supplies photographs for exhibition on Gandhi.

Other Programmes

Among the other programmes undertaken regularly are (i) Taking Gandhi to Schools, (ii) Shanti Sena Training Programme, (iii) Mobile exhibitions, (iv) Seminars, workshops, symposia, special exhibitions and meetings for the promotion of Mahatma Gandhi's ideals and the causes identified with him, and (v) Gandhi Memorial Lectures.

Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti

5, Tees January Marg, New Delhi 110011